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Mama . . . have pity on him and on me

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HARD CASH

A MATTER-OF-FACT ROMANCE

VOLUME I

By

CHARLES READE, D. C. L.



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VOL. I.

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PREFACE

“HARD CASH,” like “The Cloister and the Hearth,” is a matter-of-fact romance; that is, a fiction built on truths; and these truths have been gathered by long, severe, systematic labor, from a multitude of volumes, pamphlets, journals, reports, blue-books, manuscript narratives, letters, and living people, whom I have sought out, examined, and cross-examined, to get at the truth on each main topic I have striven to handle.

The madhouse scenes have been picked out by certain disinterested gentlemen who keep private asylums, and periodicals to puff them; and have been met with bold denials of public facts and with timid personalities, and a little easy cant about Sensation¹ Novelists; but in reality those passages have been written on the same system as the nautical, legal, and other scenes; the best

¹ This slang term is not quite accurate as applied to me. Without sensation there can be no interest; but my plan is to mix a little character and a little philosophy with the sensational element.

evidence has been ransacked; and a large portion of this evidence I shall be happy to show at my house to any brother writer who is disinterested, and really cares enough for truth and humanity to walk or ride a mile in pursuit of them.

CHARLES READE.

6 BOLTON ROW, MAYFAIR
December 5, 1863.

CORRESPONDENCE ELICITED BY THE
FIRST EDITION OF "HARD CASH."

PRIVATE ASYLUMS.

To the Editor of the Daily News.

SIR, — When a writer of sensation romances makes a heroine push a superfluous husband into a well, or set a house on fire, in order to get rid of disagreeable testimony, we smile over the highly seasoned dish, but do not think it necessary to apply the warning to ourselves, and for the future avoid sitting on the edge of a draw-well, or having any but fireproof libraries. But when we read, as in the novel "Very Hard Cash," now publishing in "All the Year Round," that any man may, at any moment, be consigned to a fate which to a sane man would be worse than death, and that not by the single act of any of our Lady Audleys, or other interesting criminals, but as part of a regular organized system, in all compliance with the laws of the land — when we read this, a thrill of terror goes through the public mind. If what Mr. Charles Reade says be possible, who is safe?

Allow me, as one thoroughly conversant with the working of the law of lunacy, to reassure the minds of your readers, by informing them that it is not possible. So

many are the checks and securities with which the legislature has most properly surrounded the person of an alleged lunatic; so vigilant, patient, and so zealous in the discharge of their duties are the Commissioners in Lunacy and the officially appointed visitors of asylums, that any one (not a sensation writer) imagining that these checks and securities could be evaded, these visitors hoodwinked in the way the author describes, would himself be a fit subject for a commission "*de lunatico inquirendo*."

So far from commissioners and visitors being put off with any "formula," such as the author quotes, and believing anybody rather than the patient himself, the exact contrary is the fact, and very properly so.

In my own case, Earl Nelson, Viscount Folkestone, General Buckley, M.P., the Rev. Charles Grove, and Mr. Martin Coats, and in other asylums, magistrates of equal intelligence and high standing, fill the office of visitors; and never in any case do they refuse a private interview to any patient asking it. In these interviews no interference of any doctors or attendants, or any "formula," is possible, and the visitors will listen even to the most incoherent ravings if there appears to be the slightest clew to be gathered from them to any real grievance.

I say nothing of the terrible slander cast upon a body of professional men to which I am proud to belong. There is no redress for that. There are certain offences with which no court of law can deal; offences against decency, good taste, and truth, which can be brought before no tribunal but that of public opinion.

I would only challenge Mr. Reade, in conclusion, if he has the slightest grounds for any belief in the possibility of the incidents he has put in print, to state those grounds. Let him quote his case, and openly and fear-

lessly declare when and where such atrocities occurred. I do not ask for one in all points resembling that which he has published; but one that furnishes even the slightest excuse for such a libellous attack upon those medical men who, like myself, practise in lunacy.

I am, etc.,

J. S. BUSHNAN, M.D.

LAVERSTOCK HOUSE ASYLUM, SALISBURY.

PRIVATE ASYLUMS.

To the Editor of the Daily News.

SIR, — My attention is drawn to a letter written to you by J. S. Bushnan, M.D., to vent a little natural irritation on the author of "Very Hard Cash," and lull the public back into the false security from which that work is calculated to rouse them.

I pass by his personalities in silence; but, when he tells you, in the roundabout style of his tribe, that "Very Hard Cash" rests on no basis of fact; that sane persons cannot possibly be incarcerated or detained under our Lunacy Acts; that the gentlemen who pay an asylum four flying visits a year know all that passes in it the odd three hundred and sixty-one days, and are never outwitted and humbugged on the spot; that no interference of doctors or attendants between visitor and patient, and no formulæ of cant and deception are possible within the walls of a madhouse — this is to play too hard upon the credulity of the public, and the forgetfulness of the press. I beg to contradict all and every one of his *general* statements, more courteously, I trust, than he has contradicted me, but quite as seriously and positively.

Dr. Bushnan knows neither the subject he is writing of, nor the man he is writing at. In matters of lunacy, I am not only a novelist; I am also that humble citizen,

who, not long ago, with the aid of the press, protected a sane man who had been falsely imprisoned in a private lunatic asylum ; hindered his recapture, showed him his legal remedy, fed, clothed, and kept him for twelve months with the aid of one true-hearted friend, during all which time a great functionary, though paid many thousands a year to do what I was doing at my own expense — justice — did all he could to defeat justice, and break the poor suitor's back and perpetuate his stigma, by tyrannically postponing, and postponing, and postponing, and postponing his trial to please the defendant. At last this great procrastinator retired, and so that worst enemy of justice, "the postponement swindle," died, and by its death trial by jury rose again from the dead, even for an alleged lunatic. Well, sir, no sooner did we get him before thirteen honest men in the light of day, than this youth — whom the mad doctors had declared and still declared insane, whom two homuncules, commissioners in lunacy, had twice visited in the asylum, and conversed with, and done nothing whatever towards his liberation — stood up eight hours in the witness-box, was examined, cross-examined, badgered ; yet calm, self-possessed, and so manifestly sane, that the defendant resigned the contest, and compounded the inevitable damages, giving us a verdict, the costs, fifty pounds cash, and an annuity of one hundred pounds a year.

All this, says Dr. Bushnan, is impossible.

I closely examined this youth as to his fellow-patients, and, as he could minutely describe the illusions of the insane ones, I find it hard to doubt his positive statement that two patients in that same house were perfectly sane.

Of course the main event I have related made some noise ; real and alleged lunatics heard there was a Quixotic ass in this island, who would, in his unguarded

moments, give away justice at his own expense, instead of selling it for so many thousands a year and not delivering the article; and I was inundated with letters and petitions, and opened a vein of private research by which the readers of "Hard Cash" will profit, all except Dr. Bushnan. A lady called on me and asked me to get her sister out of a private asylum, assuring me she was sane, and giving me proofs. Having observed that to get out of an asylum you must first be out of it, I cudgelled my brains, and split this prisoner in half; I drew up a little document authorizing a certain sharp attorney to proceed in law or equity for her relief; and sent her sister into the asylum to get it signed by the prisoner. She did sign it, and thus armed, her other self, the attorney, being outside the asylum, was listened to, though a deaf ear had always been turned to her. After a correspondence, which has served me as a model in the current number of "Hard Cash," after, in vain, suggesting her discharge to the parties pecuniarily interested in detaining her, the board actually plucked up courage and discharged her themselves. We all saw her often after this, and were hours in her company. She was perfectly sane, as sane as I am, and much saner than some of the mad doctors are at this hour, as time will show. This case opened another vein of research, and my detective staff was swelled by a respectable attendant (female), who gave me the names of two or three sane ladies, at that time in durance vilest to her knowledge.

Three years after the supposed date of Alfred Hardie's impossible incarceration came the flagrant case of "Mathew v. Harty," some of whose delicious incidents have been used in "Hard Cash," and will be contradicted by humbugs and condemned as improbable by gulls; at least I venture to hope so. The defendant was

one of that immaculate class, to criticise some of whom, if I understand Dr. Bushnan aright, is to libel the whole body; and the plaintiff was a distinguished young scholar in Dublin. Defendant enticed him into a mad-house, and there left him in a common flagged cell; but to amuse his irrational mind, lent him what? Peter Parley, or Dr. Littlewit's conjectures about the intellect of Hamlet? Oh, dear no; "Stack's Optics," "Lloyd's Mechanical Philosophy," "Brinkley's Astronomy," "Cicero de Officiis," and "Stock's Lucian."

Enter the official inspector; is appealed to, admits his sanity, promises to liberate him, and with that promise dismisses the matter from his official mind, and goes his way contented. This was sworn to afterwards and not contradicted. Then comes Dr. Harty and urges him to confession in these memorable words, sworn to, and not contradicted: "Your safety will consist in acknowledging you are insane, and your sanity will appear by admitting your insanity." Mathew saw the hook, and declined the bait. Now there was in this asylum a boy called Hoolahan, whose young mind had not been poisoned, and whose naked eye was as yet undimmed by the spectacles of cant and prejudice. So he saw at a glance Mathew was sane, and, not being paid a thousand a year to pity him, pitied him. Hoolahan took a letter to Mathew's college chum. In that letter Mathew poured out his wrongs and his distress. But suppose it should be intercepted! Mathew provided against this contingency; he couched his letter in Ciceronian Latin, humbly conceiving that this language would puzzle the doctors as much as the Latin in their prescriptions would puzzle Cicero. Mr. Hall got the letter, and, not being paid to protect alleged lunatics, took the matter up in earnest, and so frightened Dr. Harty that he discharged Mathew at once; and said, "Now, don't you be

induced to bother me about this trifle ; I'm an old man, and going to die almost immediately." On this Mathew took the alarm, and served a writ on him without loss of time. The cause came on, and was urged and defended with equal forensic ability. But evidence decides cases, and the plaintiff's evidence was overpowering. Then the defendant, despairing of a verdict, bethought him how he might lower the inevitable damages ; he instructed his counsel to reveal that "the young man who was now prosecuting him to the death was his own illegitimate son." At this revelation, ably and feelingly introduced by Counsellor Martly, the sensation was, of course, immense, and being in Ireland, a gallery came down just then and the *coup de théâtre* was perfect. Many tears were shed ; the public was moved ; the plaintiff still more so. For it is not often that a man, who has passed for an orphan all his life, can plant a writ and reap a parent. "Japhet in search of a Father" should have wandered about serving writs. The jury either saw that the relationship was irrelevant in a question so broad and civic, or else they were fathers of another stamp, and disapproved of tender parents who disown their offspring for twenty-four years, and then lock them up for mad, and only claim kindred in court to mitigate damages. At all events they found for Mr. Mathew, with damages one thousand pounds. All this, says Dr. Bushnan, was utterly impossible. Well, the impossibility in question disguised itself as fact, and went through the hollow form of taking place, upon the 11th, 12th, and 13th December, 1851, and the myth is recorded in the journals, and the authorized report by Elrington, jun., and W. P. Carr, barristers-at-law, is published in what may be an air bubble, but looks like a pamphlet by M'Glashan, 50 Upper Sackville Street, Dublin.

But I rely mainly on the private cases, which a large

correspondence with strangers, and searching inquiry amongst my acquaintances, have revealed to me; unfortunately these are nearly always accompanied with a stipulation of secrecy; so terrible, so ineradicable, is the stigma. "Hall v. Semple" clearly adds its mite of proof that certificates of insanity are still given recklessly: but to show you how strong I am, I do not rely at all on disputable cases like Nottidge, Ruck, and Leech; though in the two latter of these cases the press leaned strongly against the insanity of the prisoners, and surely the press is less open to prejudice in this matter than Dr. Bushnan is, who dates his confident conjectures from a madhouse. It seems I have related in "Hard Cash" that in one asylum (not Dr. Wycherley's), when Alfred Hardie went to complain to a visitor, a keeper interfered and said, "Take care, sir, he is dangerous." And this I then and there call a formula, one out of many. "Dreamer," says Dr. Bushnan, "there are no such things as formulæ in madhouses; and no interference between patient and inspector is possible, for there are none in my asylum, and therefore there can be none in any other." Oh, logic of psychologicals!

Mr. Drummond, in a debate on lunacy, testified as follows: "Now the honorable gentleman had remarked that it was very easy for persons in those establishments who had a complaint to make, to make it. Was it really so? (Hear, hear.) He thought otherwise. He could only say that, whenever he had visited an asylum, and went up to a lunatic who had stated that he had a ground of complaint, some keeper immediately evinced an unusual interest in his personal welfare, and cautioned him, saying, 'Take care, sir, he is a very dangerous man.' (Hear.)"

The length of this letter, which after all but skims the matter, arises out of the importance of the subject, and

the nature of all argument based on evidence. It takes but a few lines to make many bold assertions, and to challenge Mr. Reade to prove them false. But the Readian proofs cannot be so compressed. "*Plus negabit in unâ horâ unus doctor, quam centum docti in centum annis probaverint.*" I conclude by begging you to find space for the following extract from a respectable journal. I have many such extracts in my London house: this one is a fair representative of the press, and of its convictions and expressions at the time when it issued. Extract. — "Here are two cases [Mrs. Turner and Mr. Leech]: We have before us the particulars of a third, but we are not, unfortunately, in a condition to publish the names. Suffice it to say that an unfortunate gentleman who had been suffering from bodily disorder which finally affected his brain, but who was not mad, was incarcerated in one of those horrid dens which are called private lunatic asylums; and there confined for months. By his own account he was treated with the greatest cruelty, strapped down to a bed with broad bands of webbing, and kept there till it was supposed he was dying. The result we will state in the sufferer's own words: 'My back, from lying in one constrained posture, was a mass of ulcerated and sloughing sores; my right hand was swollen enormously, and useless; and two fingers of the left hand were permanently contracted, and the joints destroyed. I also lost several front teeth.' This poor man at last obtained his liberty, and applied to the commissioners for redress. Their letter in reply is now before us. The commissioners merely say that, although they do not in any degree impugn the integrity of the complainant's statements, they are not of opinion that inquiry would answer any good purpose. They add, however, that, 'in order to mark their opinion on the subject they have granted Mr.

— a license provisionally for the limited period of four months only, and that the renewal will depend upon the condition and management of his establishment being entirely satisfactory in the mean time.' [As if any great criminal would not undertake to behave better or more cautiously if, after detecting him by a miracle, we were weak enough to bribe him to more skilful hypocrisy by the promise of impunity. — C. R.] Poor consolation this for all the misery the wretched sufferer had undergone! Here, then, are three cases following one upon the other in rapid succession. How many remain behind of which we know nothing? The fact would appear to be that under existing arrangements any English man or woman may without much difficulty be incarcerated in a private lunatic asylum when not deprived of reason. If actually deprived of reason when first confined, patients may be retained in duress when their cure is perfected, and they ought to be released."

I am, etc.,

THE AUTHOR OF "VERY HARD CASH."

MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD, October 23, 1863.

To this letter I hear Dr. Bushnan has replied *down in the country*. By this, and by his not sending me a copy, may I not infer he prefers having it all his own way in the neighborhood of his asylum to encountering me again before the nation?

The extract quoted above is, I believe, from the *Times*, and was accompanied by an admirable letter of three columns thus entitled:—

LUNATIC ASYLUMS AND THE LUNACY LAWS.

(By a Physician.)

This honest inquirer should read, and also the newspaper reports of false imprisonment and cruelty, during

the last twelve years, and the contemporaneous comments of the press — before deciding to overrate my imaginative powers, and underrate my sincerity, and my patient, laborious industry.

In January, 1870, the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* drew attention to the fact that several lunatics had died of broken ribs in various asylums, and that the attendants had furnished no credible solution of the mystery. This elicited the following letter from the author of "Hard Cash": —

HOW LUNATICS' RIBS GET BROKEN.

To the Editor of the Pall Mall Gazette.

SIR, — The *Pall Mall Gazette*, January 15, deals with an important question, "the treatment of lunatics," and inquires, *inter alia*, how Santa Nistri came to have his breast-bone and eight ribs fractured at Hanwell; and how other patients have died at the same place of similar injuries; and how William Wilson came to have twelve ribs broken the other day at the Lancaster County Asylum. The question is grave; the more so, that, by every principle of statistics, scores of ribs must be broken, one or two at a time, and nobody the wiser, under a system which rises periodically to such high figures of pulverization, and so lets in the faint light of an occasional inquest, conducted by credulity in a very atmosphere of mendacity. I have precise information, applicable to these recent cases, but not derived from them, and ask leave to relate the steps by which the truth came to me.

On the 2d January, 1851, Barnes, a lunatic, died at Peckham House with an arm and four ribs broken. The people of the asylum stuck manfully together, and

agreed to know nothing about it; and justice would have been baffled entirely, but for Donnelly, an insane patient—he revealed that Hill, a keeper, had broken the man's bones. Hill was tried at the Central Criminal Court, and convicted of manslaughter on Donnelly's sole evidence, the people of the asylum maintaining an obdurate silence to the end. About 1858, I think, a lunatic patient died suddenly, with his breast-bone and eight ribs broken, which figures please compare with Santa Nistri's. As it had taken a keeper to break the five bones of Barnes, nobody believed that accident had broken the nine bones of Secker—that, I think, was the victim's name; but this time the people of the asylum had it all their own way; they stuck manfully together, stifled truth, and baffled justice. (See the Ninth Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy, p. 25.)

Late in July, 1858, there was a ball at Colney Hatch. The press were invited, and came back singing the praises of that blest retreat. What order! What gayety! What non-restraint!

*O fortunatos nimium sua si bona norint
Lunaticos.*

Next week or so Owen Swift, one of the patients in that blest retreat, died of the following injuries: breast-bone and eleven ribs broken, liver ruptured.

Varney, a patient—whose evidence reads like that of a very clear-headed gentleman, if you compare it with the doctor's that follows it—deposed to this effect: Thursday at dinner-time Swift was in good health and spirits, and more voluble than Slater, one of the keepers, approved. Slater said, "Hold your noise." Swift babbled on. Slater threw the poor man down, and dragged him into the padded room, which room then resounded for several minutes with "a great noise of knocking and

bumping about" and with the sufferer's cries of agony till these last were choked, and there was silence. Swift was not seen again till Saturday morning; and then, in presence of Varney, he accused Slater to his face of having maltreated him, and made his words good by dying that night or the very next morning.

This evidence was borne out by the state of the body (fractured sternum, and eleven fractured ribs), and not rebutted by any direct, or, indeed, rational testimony. Yet the accused was set free. But the press and the country took this decision ill. A Middlesex magistrate wrote to the *Times*, August 21, 1860, to remonstrate, and drew attention to a previous idiotic verdict in a similar case. And whereas the medical man of the establishment had assisted to clear the homicide by his own ignorance of how bones can be broken wholesale without proportionate bruises or flesh wounds, a correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* enlightened his professional ignorance on that head, and gave the public the only adequate solution of Owen Swift's death, which had been either spoken or written up to that day.

That one adequate solution was the true one. — *Daily Telegraph*, August 9, 1860.

Time, 1862. Place, Hanwell. Matthew Geoghegan, a patient, refused to go to bed. Jones, a keeper, threw him down, and kicked him several times; then got a stick and beat him; then got a fire-shovel and beat him; then jumped on his body; then walked up and down his body; of which various injuries the man died, not immediately, but yet so speedily that the cuts and bruises were still there to show what had killed him.

Bone, a bricklayer, and eye-witness of the homicide, swore to the above facts. Linch, Bone's laborer, another eye-witness, swore to the same facts. The resident engineer swore that Bone and Linch were both true men.

Dr. Jephson had found the man with bruises, one of which, on his abdomen, had been caused by the heel of a boot. *Per contra*, a doctor was found to swear as follows: "I swear that I *think* he died of pleuro-pneumonia. I swear that I *don't know* whether his external injuries contributed to his death."

And upon this, though no pleuro-pneumonia could be shown in the mutilated body, though Bone and Linch, disinterested witnesses, deposed to plain facts, and the doctor merely delivered a wild and improbable conjecture, and then swore to his own ignorance on the point in doubt, if doubt there could be — yet this jury, with their eyes to confirm what their ears heard sworn, and their ears to confirm what their eyes saw written on the mangled corpse, actually delivered the following verdict: "Deceased died after receiving certain injuries from external violence; but whether the death was occasioned by natural causes, or by such violence, there was not sufficient evidence to show." They then relieved their consciences in the drollest way. They turned round on Bone and Linch, and reprimanded them severely for not having interfered to prevent the cruelty, which they themselves were shielding in the present and fostering in the future by as direct a lie as ever twelve honest men delivered. Suppose the bricklayer and his man had replied, "Why, look ye, gentlemen; we came into the madhouse to lay bricks, not to do justice. But you came into the madhouse to do justice. We should have lost our bread if we had interfered; but you could have afforded to play the men — and didn't."

I enclose herewith the evidence of the bricklayers, and the sworn conjectures of the doctor, *in re* Geoghegan; also the evidence of the doctor, and of the comparatively clear-headed lunatic, *in re* Swift.

About this time my researches into the abuses of pri-

vate *asyla* (which abuses are quite distinct from the subject in hand) brought me into contact with multifarious facts, and with a higher class of evidence than the official inquirers permit themselves to hear. They rely too much on medical attendants and other servants of an asylum, whose interest it is to veil ugly truths and sprinkle hells with rose-water. I, on the contrary, examined a number of ex-patients who had never been too mad to observe, and ex-attendants, male and female, who had gone into other lines of life, and could now afford to reveal the secrets of those dark places.

The ex-keepers were all agreed in this — that the keepers know how to break a patient's bones without bruising the skin; and that the doctors have been duped again and again by them. To put it in my own words, the bent knees, big bluntish bones, and clothed, can be applied with terrible force, yet not leave their mark upon the skin of the victim. The refractory patient is thrown down and the keeper walks up and down him on his knees, and even jumps on his body, knees downwards, until he is completely cowed. Should a bone or two be broken in this process, it does not much matter to the keeper: a lunatic complaining of internal injury is not listened to. He is a being so full of illusions that nobody believes in any unseen injury he prates about.

In these words, sir, you have the key to the death of Barnes, of Secker, if that was the man's name; and of other victims recorded by the commissioners, of Nistri, and of William Wilson, at Lancaster.

I hope this last inquiry has not been weakly abandoned. It is a very shocking thing that both brute force and traditional cunning should be employed against persons of weak understanding, and that they should be so often massacred, so seldom avenged.

Something might be done if the people in Lancashire would take the matter seriously.

The first thing they should do is to inquire whether the keeper who killed a stunted imbecile by internal injuries in the Lancaster Asylum, May, 1863, is still in that asylum. See *Public Opinion*, November 19, 1863.

The next step is to realize and act upon the two following maxims:—

First, it is the sure sign of a fool to accept an inadequate solution of undeniable facts.

Secondly, to advance an inadequate solution of facts so indisputable as twelve broken ribs is a sign either of guilt or guilty connivance.

Honest men in Lancashire should inquire who first put forward some stupid, impudent falsehood to account for the twelve broken ribs of Wilson. The *first liar* was probably the homicide, or an accomplice.

Just to prove the importance I attach to this inquiry, permit me, through your columns, to offer a reward of a hundred pounds to any person or persons who will give such evidence as may lead to the conviction of the person or persons who have killed William Wilson by kneeling on him, by walking knees downwards upon him, and jumping knees downwards upon him.

It is interest that closes men's mouths in these dark places. We must employ the same instrument to open them: it is our only chance.

I am, sir, yours very faithfully,

CHARLES READE.

2 ALBERT TERRACE, KNIGHTSBRIDGE,
January 17, 1870.

NOTICE, 1863.

I REQUEST all those persons in various ranks of life — who by letter or *vivâ voce* have during the last five years told me of sane persons incarcerated or detained in private asylums, and of other abuses — to communicate with me by letter. I also invite fresh communications: and desire it to be known that this great question did not begin with me in the pages of a novel, neither shall it end there; for, where justice and humanity are both concerned, there —

Dict sans fait

A Dieu déplait

HARD CASH.

PROLOGUE.

IN a snowy villa, with a sloping lawn, just outside the great commercial seaport, Barkington, there lived a few years ago a happy family. A lady, middle-aged, but still charming, two young friends of hers, and a periodical visitor.

The lady was Mrs. Dodd; her occasional visitor was her husband; her friends were her son Edward, aged twenty, and her daughter Julia, nineteen; the fruit of a misalliance.

Mrs. Dodd was originally Miss Fountain, a young lady well born, high-bred, and a denizen of the fashionable world. Under a strange concurrence of circumstances she coolly married the captain of an East Indiaman. The deed done, and with her eyes open, for she was not, to say, in love with him, she took a judicious line; and kept it; no hankering after Mayfair, no talking about Lord "This" and Lady "That," to commercial gentlewomen; no amphibiousness. She accepted her place in society, reserving the right to embellish it with the graces she had gathered in a higher sphere. In her home, and in her person, she was little less elegant than a countess; yet nothing more than a merchant-captain's wife: and she reared that commander's children, in a

suburban villa, with the manners which adorn a palace. When they happen to be there. She had a bugbear: Slang. Could not endure the smart technicalities current; their multitude did not overpower her distaste; she called them "jargon;" "slang" was too coarse a word for her to apply to slang: she excluded many a good "racy idiom" along with the real offenders; and monosyllables in general ran some risk of having to show their passports. If this was pedantry, it went no further; she was open, free, and youthful with her young pupils; and had the art to put herself on their level: often, when they were quite young, she would feign infantine ignorance, in order to hunt trite truth in couples with them, and detect, by joint experiment, that rainbows cannot, or else will not, be walked into, nor Jack-o'-lantern be gathered like a cowslip; and that, dissect we the vocal dog — whose hair is so like a lamb's — never so skilfully, no fragment of palpable bark, no sediment of tangible squeak, remains inside him to bless the inquisitive little operator, etc. When they advanced from these elementary branches to languages, history, tapestry, and "what not," she managed still to keep by their side learning with them, not just hearing them lessons down from the top of a high tower of maternity. She never checked their curiosity; but made herself share it; never gave them, as so many parents do, a white-lying answer: wooed their affections with subtle though innocent art; thawed their reserve, obtained their love, and retained their respect. Briefly, a female Chesterfield; her husband's lover after marriage, though not before; and the mild monitress, the elder sister, the favorite companion and bosom friend, of both her children.

They were remarkably dissimilar; and, perhaps I may be allowed to preface the narrative of their adventures

by a delineation; as in country churches an individual pipes the key-note, and the tune comes raging after.

Edward, then, had a great calm eye, that was always looking folk full in the face, mildly; his countenance comely and manly, but no more; too square for Apollo; but sufficed for John Bull. His figure it was that charmed the curious observer of male beauty. He was five feet ten; had square shoulders, a deep chest, masculine flank, small foot, high instep. To crown all this, a head, overflowed by ripples of dark-brown hair, sat with heroic grace upon his solid white throat, like some glossy falcon new lighted on a Parian column.

This young gentleman had decided qualities, positive and negative. He could walk up to a five-barred gate, and clear it, alighting on the other side like a fallen feather; could row all day, and then dance all night; could fling a cricket-ball a hundred and six yards; had a lathe and a tool-box, and would make you in a trice a chair, a table, a doll, a nutcracker, or any other movable, useful, or the very reverse. And could not learn his lessons, to save his life.

His sister Julia was not so easy to describe. Her figure was tall, lithe, and serpentine; her hair the color of a horse-chestnut fresh from its pod; her ears tiny and shell-like, her eyelashes long and silky; her mouth small when grave, large when smiling; her eyes pure hazel by day, and tinged with a little violet by night. But in jotting down these details, true as they are, I seem to myself to be painting fire with a little snow and saffron mixed on a marble palette. There is a beauty too spiritual to be chained in a string of items; and Julia's fair features were but the china vessel that brimmed over with the higher loveliness of her soul. Her essential charm was, what shall I say? Transparency.

You would have said her very body thought.

Modesty, intelligence, and, above all, enthusiasm, shone through her, and out of her, and made her an airy, fiery household joy. Briefly, an incarnate sunbeam.

This one could learn her lessons with unreasonable rapidity, and until Edward went to Eton, would insist upon learning his into the bargain, partly with the fond notion of coaxing him on; as the company of a swift horse incites a slow one; partly because she was determined to share his every trouble, if she could not remove it. A little choleric, and indeed downright prone to that more generous indignation which fires at the wrongs of others. When heated with emotion, or sentiment, she lowered her voice, instead of raising it like the rest of us; she called her mother "Lady Placid," and her brother "Sir Imperturbable." And so much for outlines.

Mrs. Dodd laid aside her personal ambition with her maiden name: but she looked high for her children. Perhaps she was all the more ambitious for them, that they had no rival aspirant in Mrs. Dodd. She educated Julia herself from first to last: but with true feminine distrust of her power to mould a lordling of creation, she sent Edward to Eton, at nine. This was slackening her tortoise; for at Eton is no female master, to coax dry knowledge into a slow head. However, he made good progress in two branches — aquatics and cricket.

After Eton came the choice of a profession. His mother recognized but four; and these her discreet ambition speedily sifted down to two. For military heroes are shot now and then, however pacific the century; and naval ones drowned. She would never expose her Edward to this class of accidents. Glory by all means; glory by the pail; but safe glory, please; or she would none of it. Remained the church and the bar: and, within these reasonable limits, she left her dear boy

free as air; and not even hurried; there was plenty of time to choose: he must pass through the university to either. This last essential had been settled about a twelvemonth, and the very day for his going to Oxford was at hand, when one morning Mr. Edward formally cleared his throat: it was an unusual act, and drew the ladies' eyes upon him. He followed the solemnity up by delivering calmly and ponderously a connected discourse, which astonished them by its length and purport. "Mamma, dear, let us look the thing in the face. (This was his favorite expression, as well as habit.) I have been thinking it quietly over for the last six months. Why send me to the university? I shall be out of place there. It will cost you a lot of money, and no good. Now, you take a fool's advice: don't you waste your money and papa's sending a dull fellow like me to Oxford. I did bad enough at *Eton*. Make me an engineer, or something. If you were not so fond of me, and I of you, I'd say send me to Canada, with a pickaxe; you know I have got no head-piece."

Mrs. Dodd had sat aghast, casting Edward deprecating looks at the close of each ponderous sentence, but too polite to interrupt a soul, even a son talking nonsense. She now assured him she could afford very well to send him to Oxford, and begged leave to remind him that he was too good and too sensible to run up bills there, like the young men who did not really love their parents. "Then, as for learning, why, we must be reasonable in our turn. Do the best you can, love. We know you have no great turn for the classics; we do not expect you to take high honors like young Mr. Hardie; besides, that might make your head ache: he has sad headaches, his sister told Julia. But, my dear, an university education is indispensable; do but see how the signs of it follow a gentleman through life, to say nothing of the

valuable acquaintances and lasting friendships he makes there: even those few distinguished persons who have risen in the world without it, have openly regretted the want, and have sent their children: and *that* says volumes to me."

"Why, Edward, it is the hall-mark of a gentleman," said Julia, eagerly. Mrs. Dodd caught a flash of her daughter: "And my silver shall never be without it," said she, warmly. She added presently, in her usual placid tone, "I beg your pardon, my dears, I ought to have said my gold." With this she kissed Edward tenderly on the brow, and drew an embrace and a little grunt of resignation from him. "Take the dear boy and show him our purchases, love!" said Mrs. Dodd, with a little gentle accent of half reproach, scarce perceptible to a male ear.

"Oh, yes;" and Julia rose and tripped to the door. There she stood a moment, half turned, with arching neck, coloring with innocent pleasure. "Come, darling. Oh, you good-for-nothing thing!"

The pair found a little room hard by, paved with china, crockery, glass, baths, kettles, etc.

"There, sir. Look them in the face; and us, if you can."

"Well, you know, I had no idea you had been and bought a cart-load of things for Oxford." His eye brightened; he whipped out a two-foot rule, and began to calculate the cubic contents. "I'll turn to and make the cases, Ju."

The ladies had their way; the cases were made and despatched; and one morning the bus came for Edward, and stopped at the gate of Albion Villa. At this sight mother and daughter both turned their heads quickly away by one independent impulse, and set a bad example.

Apparently neither of them had calculated on this paltry little detail; they were game for theoretical departures; to impalpable universities: and "an air-drawn bus, a bus of the mind," would not have dejected for a moment their lofty Spartan souls on glory bent; safe glory. But here was a bus of wood, and Edward going bodily away inside it. The victim kissed them, threw up his portmanteau and bag, and departed serene as Italian skies; the victors watched the pitiless bus quite out of sight; then went up to his bedroom, all disordered by packing, and, on the very face of it, vacant; and sat down on his little bed intertwining and weeping.

Edward was received at Exeter College, as young gentlemen are received at college; and nowhere else, I hope, for the credit of Christendom. They showed him a hole in the roof, and called it an "Attic;" grim pleasantry! being a puncture in the modern Athens. They inserted him; told him what hour at the top of the morning he must be in chapel; and left him to find out his other ills. His cases were welcomed like Christians, by the whole staircase. These undergraduates abused one another's crockery as their own: the joint stock of breakables had just dwindled very low, and Mrs. Dodd's bountiful contribution was a godsend.

The new-comer soon found that his views of a learned university had been narrow. Out of place in it? why, he could not have taken his wares to a better market; the modern Athens, like the ancient, cultivates muscle as well as mind. The captain of the university eleven saw a cricket-ball thrown all across the ground; he instantly sent a professional bowler to find out who that was; through the same ambassador the thrower was invited to play on club days; and proving himself an infallible catch and long stop, a mighty thrower, a swift

runner, and a steady, though not very brilliant, bat, he was, after one or two repulses, actually adopted into the university eleven. He communicated this ray of glory by letter to his mother and sister with genuine delight, coldly and clumsily expressed; they replied with feigned and fluent rapture. Advancing steadily in that line of academic study, towards which his genius lay, he won a hurdle race, and sent home a little silver hurdle; and soon after brought a pewter pot, with a Latin inscription recording the victory at "Fives" of Edward Dodd: but not too arrogantly; for in the centre of the pot was this device, "*The Lord is my illumination.*" The curate of Sandford, who pulled number six in the Exeter boat, left Sandford for Witney: on this he felt he could no longer do his college justice by water, and his parish by land, nor escape the charge of pluralism, preaching at Witney and rowing at Oxford. He fluctuated, sighed, kept his Witney, and laid down his oar. Then Edward was solemnly weighed in his jersey and flannel trousers, and proving only eleven stone eight, whereas he had been ungenerously suspected of twelve stone,¹ was elected to the vacant oar by acclamation. He was a picture in a boat; and oh! well pulled, Six! was a hearty ejaculation constantly hurled at him from the bank by many men of other colleges, and even by the more genial among the cads, as the Exeter glided at ease down the river, or shot up it in a race.

He was now as much talked of in the university as any man of his college, except one. Singularly enough, that one was his townsman; but no friend of his; he was much Edward's senior in standing, though not in age; and this is a barrier the junior must not step over — without direct encouragement — at Oxford. More-

¹ There was at this time a prejudice against weight, which has yielded to experience.

over, the college was a large one, and some of "the sets" very exclusive: young Hardie was Doge of a studious clique, and careful to make it understood that he was a reading man who boated and cricketed to avoid the fatigue of lounging, not a boatman or cricketer who strayed into Aristotle in the intervals of perspiration.

His public running since he left Harrow was as follows: the prize poem in his fourth term; the sculls in his sixth; the Ireland scholarship in his eighth (he pulled second for it the year before); stroke of the Exeter in his tenth; and reckoned sure of a first class to consummate his twofold career.

To this young Apollo, crowned with variegated laurel, Edward looked up from a distance. The brilliant creature never bestowed a word on him by land; and by water only such observations as the following: "Time, Six!" "Well pulled, Six!" "Very well pulled, Six!" Except, by-the-by, one race, when he swore at him like a trooper for not being quick at starting. The excitement of nearly being bumped by Brasenose in the first hundred yards was an excuse; however, Hardie apologized as they were dressing in the barge after the race; but the apology was so stiff, it did not pave the way to acquaintance.

Young Hardie, rising twenty-one, thought nothing human worthy of reverence but intellect. Invited to dinner, on the same day, with the Emperor of Russia, and with Voltaire, and with meek St. John, he would certainly have told the coachman to put him down at Voltaire.

His quick eye detected Edward's character; but was not attracted by it: says he, to one of his adherents, "What a good-natured spoon that Dodd is; Phœbus, what a name!" Edward, on the other hand, praised this brilliant in all his letters, and recorded his triumphs

and such of his witty sayings as leaked through his own set, to reinvigorate mankind. This roused Julia's ire. It smouldered through three letters: but burst out when there was no letter, but Mrs. Dodd, meaning, Heaven knows, no harm, happened to say meekly, *à propos* of Edward: "You know, love, we cannot all be young Hardies." — "No, and thank Heaven!" said Julia, defiantly. "Yes, mamma," she continued, in answer to Mrs. Dodd's eyebrow, which had curved; "your mild glance reads my soul; I detest that boy." Mrs. Dodd smiled. "Are you sure you know what the word 'detest' means? and what has young Mr. Hardie done, that you should bestow so violent a sentiment on him?"

"Mamma, I am Edward's sister," was the tragic reply; then, kicking off the buskin pretty nimbly, "there! he beats our boy at everything, and ours sits quietly down and admires him for it: oh! how can a man let anybody or anything beat him! I wouldn't; without a desperate struggle." She clenched her white teeth and imagined the struggle. To be sure, she owned she had never seen this Mr. Hardie; but, after all, it was only Jane Hardie's brother, as Edward was hers. "And would I sit down and let Jane beat me at things? never! never! never! I couldn't."

"Your friend to the death, dear; was not that your expression?"

"Oh, that was a slip of the tongue, dear mamma; I was off my guard. I generally am, by the way. But now I am on it, and propose an amendment. Now I second it. Now I carry it."

"And now let me hear it."

"She is my friend till death — or eclipse; and that means until she eclipses me, of course." But she added softly, and with sudden gravity, "Ah! Jane Hardie has a fault which will always prevent her from eclipsing your humble servant in this wicked world."

“What is that?”

“She is too good. Much.”

“*Par exemple!*”

“Too religious.”

“Oh, that is another matter.”

“For shame, mamma! I am glad to hear it: for I scorn a life of frivolity; but then, again, I should not like to give up everything, you know.” Mrs. Dodd looked a little staggered, too, at so vast a scheme of capitulation. But “everything” was soon explained to mean balls, concerts, dinner-parties in general, tea-parties without exposition of Scripture, races and operas, cards, charades, and whatever else amuses society without perceptibly sanctifying it. All these, by Julia’s account, Miss Hardie had renounced, and was now denouncing (with the young the latter verb treads on the very heels of the former). “And, you know, she is a district visitor.”

This climax delivered, Julia stopped short and awaited the result.

Mrs. Dodd heard it all with quiet disapproval and cool incredulity. She had seen so many young ladies healed of so many young enthusiasms by a wedding-ring. But, while she was searching diligently in her mine of lady-like English — mine with plenty of water in it, begging her pardon — for expressions to convey inoffensively and roundabout her conviction that Miss Hardie was a little furious simpleton, the post came and swept the subject away in a moment.

Two letters; one from Calcutta, one from Oxford.

They came quietly in upon one salver, and were opened and read with pleasurable interest, but without surprise or misgiving; and without the slightest foretaste of their grave and singular consequences.

Rivers deep and broad start from such little springs.

David's letter was of unusual length for him. The main topics were, first, the date and manner of his return home. His ship, a very old one, had been condemned in port: and he was to sail a fine new teak-built vessel, the *Agra*, as far as the Cape; where her captain, just recovered from a severe illness, would come on board and convey her and him to England. In future, Dodd was to command one of the company's large steamers to Alexandria and back.

“It is rather a come-down for a sailor, to go straight ahead like a wheelbarrow, in all weathers, with a steam-pot and a crew of coal-heavers. But then I shall not be parted from my sweetheart such long dreary spells as I have been these twenty years, my dear love: so is it for me to complain?”

The second topic was pecuniary; the transfer of their savings from India, where interest was higher than at home, but the capital not so secure.

And the third was ardent and tender expressions of affection for the wife and children he adored. These effusions of the heart had no separate place, except in my somewhat arbitrary analysis of the honest sailor's letter; they were the under-current.

Mrs. Dodd read part of it out to Julia: in fact, all but the money matter: that concerned the heads of the family more immediately; and cash was a topic her daughter did not understand nor care about. And when Mrs. Dodd had read it with glistening eyes, she kissed it tenderly, and read it all over again to herself, and then put it into her bosom as naively as a milkmaid in love.

Edward's letter was short enough, and Mrs. Dodd allowed Julia to read it to her, which she did with panting breath and glowing cheeks, and a running fire of comments.

DEAR MAMMA, — I hope you and Ju are quite well --

“Ju,” murmured Mrs. Dodd, plaintively.

— And that there is good news about papa coming home. As for me, I have plenty on my hands just now: all this term I have been (‘‘training’ scratched out, and another word put in: c-r — oh, I know’’) cramming.

“Cramming, love?”

“Yes, that is the Oxfordish for studying.”

— For smalls.

Mrs. Dodd contrived to sigh interrogatively. Julia, who understood her every accent, reminded her that “smalls” was the new word for “little go.”

— Cramming for smalls; and now I am in two races at Henley, and that rather puts the snaffle on reading and gooseberry-pie (Goodness me!), and adds to my chance of being ploughed for smalls.

“What does it all mean?” inquired mamma: “‘gooseberry-pie,’ and ‘the snaffle,’ and ‘ploughed’?”

“Well, the gooseberry-pie is really too deep for me, but ploughed is the new Oxfordish for ‘plucked.’ O mamma! have you forgotten that? Plucked was vulgar, so now they are ploughed.”

— For smalls; but I hope I shall not be, to vex you and Puss.

“Heaven forbid he should be so disgraced! But what has the cat to do with it?”

“Nothing on earth. Puss? that is me. How dare he? Did I not forbid all these nicknames and all this Oxfordish, by proclamation, last long?”

“Last long?”

“Hem! last protracted vacation.”

— Dear mamma, sometimes I cannot help being down in the mouth (why, it is a string of pearls) to think you have

not got a son like Hardie. (At this unfortunate reflection it was Julia's turn to suffer. She deposited the letter in her lap, and fired up. "Now, have I not a cause to hate and scorn and despise *le petit* Hardie?")

"Julia!"

"I mean, to dislike with propriety and gently to abominate — Mr. Hardie, junior."

— Dear mamma, do come to Henley on the tenth, you and Ju. The university eights will not be there, but the head boats of the Oxford and Cambridge river will; and the Oxford head boat is Exeter, you know; and I pull Six.

"Then I am truly sorry to hear it; my poor boy will overtask his strength; and how unfair of the other young gentlemen; it seems ungenerous, unreasonable; my poor child against so many."

— And I am entered for the sculls as well, and if you and "the Impetuosity" (Vengeance!) were looking on from the bank, I do think I should be lucky this time. Henley is a long way from Barkington, but it is a pretty place; all the ladies admire it, and like to see both the universities out and a stunning race. (Oh, well, there *is* an epithet. One would think thunder was going to race lightning, instead of Oxford Cambridge.)

If you can come, please write, and I will get you nice lodgings; I will not let you go to a noisy inn. Love to Julia and no end of kisses to my pretty mamma.

From your affectionate son,

EDWARD DODD.

They wrote off a cordial assent, and reached Henley in time to see the dullest town in Europe; and also to see it turn one of the gayest in an hour or two; so impetuously came both the universities pouring into it — in all known vehicles that could go *their* pace — by land and water.

CHAPTER I.

It was a bright hot day in June. Mrs. Dodd and Julia sat half reclining, with their parasols up, in an open carriage, by the brink of the Thames at one of its loveliest bends.

About a furlong up stream a silvery stone bridge, just mellowed by time, spanned the river with many fair arches. Through these the coming river peeped sparkling a long way above, then came meandering and shining down; loitered cool and sombre under the dark vaults, then glistened on again crookedly to the spot where sat its two fairest visitors that day, but at that very point flung off its serpentine habits, and shot straight away in a broad stream of scintillating water a mile long, down to an island in mid-stream, — a little fairy island with old trees, and a white temple. To curl round this fairy isle the broad current parted, and both silver streams turned purple in the shade of the grove, then winded and melted from the sight.

This noble and rare passage of the silvery Thames was the Henley race-course. The starting-place was down at the island, and the goal was up at a point in the river below the bridge, but above the bend where Mrs. Dodd and Julia sat, unruffled by the racing, and enjoying luxuriously the glorious stream, the mellow bridge crowded with carriages, whose fair occupants stretched a broad band of bright color above the dark figures clustering on the battlements, and the green meadows opposite with the motley crowd streaming up and down.

Nor was that sense, which seems especially keen and

delicate in women, left unregaled in the general bounty of the time. The green meadows on the opposite bank, and the gardens at the back of our fair friends, flung their sweet fresh odors at their liquid benefactor gliding by; and the sun himself seemed to burn perfumes, and the air to scatter them, over the motley, merry crowd that bright, hot, smiling, airy day in June.

Thus tuned to gentle enjoyment, the fair mother and her lovely daughter leaned back in a delicious languor proper to their sex, and eyed with unflagging though demure interest, and furtive curiosity, the wealth of youth, beauty, stature, agility, gayety, and good temper, the two great universities had poured out upon those obscure banks; all dressed in neat but easy-fitting clothes, cut in the height of the fashion, or else in jerseys white or striped, and flannel trousers, and straw hats, or cloth caps of bright and various hues, betting, strolling, laughing, chaffing, larking, and whirling stunted bludgeons at Aunt Sally.

But as for the sport itself they were there to see, the centre of all these bright accessories, "the racing," my ladies did not understand it, nor try, nor care a hook-and-eye about it. But this mild dignified indifference to the main event received a shock at 2 P.M., for then the first heat for the cup came on, and Edward was in it. So then racing became all in a moment a most interesting pastime, — an appendage to loving. He left to join his crew. And soon after the Exeter glided down the river before their eyes, with the beloved one rowing quietly in it. His jersey revealed not only the working power of his arms, as sunburnt below the elbow as a gypsy's, and as corded above as a blacksmith's, but also the play of the great muscles across his broad and deeply indented chest. His oar entered the water smoothly, gripped it severely, then came out clean, and

feathered clear and tunably on the ringing rowlock: the boat jumped and then glided at each neat, easy, powerful stroke. "Oh, how beautiful and strong he is!" cried Julia. "I had no idea."

Presently the competitor for this heat came down, the Cambridge boat, rowed by a fine crew in broad-striped jerseys. "Oh, dear!" said Julia, "they are odious and strong in this boat too. I wish I was in it—with a gimlet; he *should* win, poor boy."

Which corkscrew staircase to honor being inaccessible, the race had to be decided by two unfeminine trifles called "speed" and "bottom."

Few things in this vale of tears are more worthy a pen of fire than an English boat-race, as seen by the runners, of whom I have often been one. But this race I am bound to indicate, not describe. I mean to show how it appeared to two ladies seated on the Henley side of the Thames, nearly opposite the winning-post. These fair novices then looked all down the river, and could just discern two whitish streaks on the water, one on each side the little fairy isle, and a great black patch on the Berkshire bank. The threatening streaks were the two racing boats: the black patch was about a hundred Cambridge and Oxford men, ready to run and halloo with the boats all the way, or at least till the last puff of wind should be run plus halloosed out of their young bodies. Others less fleet and enduring, but equally clamorous, stood in knots at various distances, ripe for a shorter yell and run when the boats should come up to them. Of the natives and country visitors, those who were not nailed down by bounteous Fate ebbed and flowed up and down the bank with no settled idea, but of getting in the way as much as possible, and of getting knocked into the Thames as little as might be.

There was a long uneasy suspense.

At last a puff of smoke issued from a pistol down at the island; two oars seemed to splash into the water from each white streak, and the black patch was moving: so were the threatening streaks. Presently was heard a faint, continuous, distant murmur, and the streaks began to get larger and larger and larger; and the eight splashing oars looked four instead of two.

Every head was now turned down the river. Groups hung craning over it like nodding bulrushes.

Next the runners were swelled by the stragglers they picked up; so were their voices; and on came the splashing oars and roaring lungs.

Now the colors of the racing jerseys peeped distinct. The oarsmen's heads and bodies came swinging back like one, and the oars seemed to lash the water savagely, like a connected row of swords, and the spray squirted at each vicious stroke. The boats leaped and darted side by side, and, looking at them in front, Julia could not say which was ahead. On they came nearer and nearer, with hundreds of voices vociferating, "Go it, Cambridge!" "Well pulled, Oxford!" "You are gaining, hurrah!" "Well pulled, Trinity!" "Hurrah!" "Oxford!" "Cambridge!" "Now is your time, Hardie; pick her up!" "Oh, well pulled, Six!" "Well pulled, Stroke!" "Up, up! lift her a bit!" "Cambridge!" "Oxford!" "Hurrah!"

At this Julia turned red and pale by turns. "O mamma!" said she, clasping her hands and coloring high, "would it be very wrong if I was to *pray* for Oxford to win?"

Mrs. Dodd had a monitory finger; it was on her left hand: she raised it, and that moment, as if she had given a signal, the boats, foreshortened no longer, shot out to treble the length they had looked hitherto, and

came broadside past our palpitating fair, the elastic rowers stretched like greyhounds in a chase, darting forward at each stroke so boldly they seemed flying out of the boats, and surging back as superbly, an eightfold human wave: their nostrils all open, the lips of some pale and glutinous, their white teeth all clenched grimly, their young eyes all glowing, their supple bodies swelling, the muscles writhing beneath their jerseys, and the sinews starting on each bare brown arm; their little shrill coxswains shouting imperiously at the young giants, and working to and fro with them, like jockeys at a finish; nine souls and bodies flung whole into each magnificent effort; water foaming and flying, rowlocks ringing, crowd running, tumbling, and howling like mad; and Cambridge a boat's nose ahead.

They had scarcely passed our two spectators, when Oxford put on a furious spurt, and got fully even with the leading boat. There was a louder roar than ever from the bank. Cambridge spurted desperately in turn, and stole those few feet back; and so they went fighting every inch of water. Bang! A cannon on the bank sent its smoke over both competitors: it dispersed in a moment, and the boats were seen pulling slowly towards the bridge, Cambridge with four oars, Oxford with six, as if that gun had winged them both.

The race was over.

But who had won, our party could not see, and must wait to learn.

A youth, adorned with a blue and yellow rosette, cried out, in the hearing of Mrs. Dodd, "I say, they are properly pumped, both crews are;" then, jumping on to a spoke of her carriage-wheel, with a slight apology, he announced that two or three were shut up in the Exeter.

The exact meaning of these two verbs passive was not clear to Mrs. Dodd, but their intensity was: she flut-

tered, and wanted to go to her boy and nurse him, and turned two most imploring eyes on Julia, and Julia straightway kissed her with gentle vehemence, and offered to run and see.

“What, amongst all those young gentlemen, love? I fear that would not be proper. See, all the ladies remain apart.” So they kept quiet and miserable, after the manner of females.

Meantime the Cantab’s quick eye had not deceived him; in each racing-boat were two young gentlemen leaning collapsed over their oars; and two more, who were in a cloud, and not at all clear whether they were in this world still, or in their zeal had pulled into a better. But their malady was not a rare one in racing boats, and the remedy always at hand; it combined the rival systems: Thames was sprinkled in their faces, — Homœopathy; and brandy in a teaspoon trickled down their throats, — Allopathy. Youth and spirits soon did the rest; and, the moment their eyes opened, their mouths opened, and, the moment their mouths opened, they fell a-chaffing.

Mrs. Dodd’s anxiety and Julia’s were relieved by the appearance of Mr. Edward, in a tweed shooting-jacket, sauntering down to them, hands in his pockets, and a cigar in his mouth, placidly unconscious of their solicitude on his account. He was received with a little guttural cry of delight. The misery they had been in about him was duly concealed from him by both, and Julia asked him warmly who had won.

“Oh, Cambridge.”

“Cambridge! Why, then you are beaten?”

“Rather.” (Puff.)

“And you can come here with that horrible calm, and cigar, owning defeat, and puffing tranquillity, with the same mouth. Mamma, we are beaten. Beaten, actually.”

"Never mind," said Edward kindly, "you have seen a capital race, the closest ever known on this river, and one side or other must lose."

"And if they did not quite win, they very nearly did," observed Mrs. Dodd composedly; then, with heartfelt content, "He is not hurt, and that is the main thing."

"Well, my Lady Placid and Mr. Imperturbable, I am glad neither of your equanimities is disturbed; but defeat is a bitter pill to me."

Julia said this in her earnest voice, and, drawing her scarf suddenly round her, so as almost to make it speak, digested her bitter pill in silence, during which process several Exeter men caught sight of Edward, and came round him, and an animated discussion took place. They began with asking him how it had happened, and, as he never spoke in a burry, supplied him with the answers. A stretcher had broken in the Exeter. No, but the Cambridge was a much better built boat, and her bottom cleaner. The bow oar of the Exeter was ill, and not fit for work. Each of these solutions was advanced, and combated in turn, and then all together. At last the Babel lulled, and Edward was once more appealed to.

"Well, I will tell you the real truth," said he, "how it happened." (Puff.)

There was a pause of expectation, for the young man's tone was that of conviction, knowledge, and authority.

"The Cambridge men pulled faster than we did." (Puff.)

The hearers stared and then laughed.

"Come, old fellows," said Edward, "never win a boat-race on dry land! That is such a *plain* thing to do: gives the other side the laugh as well as the race. I have heard a stretcher or two told, but I saw none broken. (Puff.) Their boat is the worst I ever saw: it dips every stroke. (Puff.) Their strength lies in the

crew. It was a good race and a fair one. Cambridge got a lead and kept it. (Puff.) They beat us a yard or two at rowing ; but, hang it all ! don't let them beat us at telling the truth, not by an inch." (Puff.)

"All right, old fellow !" was now the cry. One observed, however, that Stroke did not take the matter so coolly as Six, for he had shed a tear getting out of the boat.

"Shed a fiddlestick !" squeaked a little sceptic.

"No," said another, "he didn't quite shed it; his pride wouldn't let him."

"So he decanted it, and put it by for supper," suggested Edward, and puffed.

"None of your chaff, Six. He had a gulp or two, and swallowed the rest by main force."

"Don't you talk ; you can swallow anything, it seems." (Puff.)

"Well, I believe it," said one of Hardie's own set. "Dodd doesn't know him as we do. Taff Hardie can't bear to be beat."

When they were gone, Mrs. Dodd observed, "Dear me ! what if the young gentleman did cry a little, it was very excusable ; after such great exertions it *was* disappointing, mortifying. I pity him for one, and wish he had his mother alive and here, to dry them."¹

"Mamma, it is you for reading us," cried Edward, slapping his thigh. "Well, then, since you can feel for a fellow, Hardie *was* a good deal cut up. You know the university was in a manner beaten, and he took the blame. He never cried ; that was a cracker of those fellows. But he did give one great sob, that was all, and hung his head on one side a moment. But then he fought out of it, directly, like a man, and there was an end of it, or ought to have been. Hang chatterboxes !"

¹ Oh where, and oh where, *was* her Lindley Murray gone ?

“And what did you say to console him, Edward?” inquired Julia, warmly.

“What, me? Console my senior and my stroke? No, thank you.”

At this thunderbolt of etiquette both ladies kept their countenances — this was *their* muscular feat that day — and the racing for the sculls came on: six competitors — two Cambridge, three Oxford, one London. The three heats furnished but one good race, a sharp contest between a Cambridge man and Hardie, ending in favor of the latter; the Londoner walked away from his opponent. Sir Imperturbable’s competitor was impetuous, and ran into him in the first hundred yards, Sir I. consenting calmly. The umpire, appealed to on the spot, decided that it was a foul, Mr. Dodd being in his own water. He walked over the course, and explained the matter to his sister, who delivered her mind thus: —

“Oh! if races are to be won by going slower than the other, we may shine yet: *only*, I call it cheating, not racing.”

He smiled unmoved; she gave her scarf the irony twist, and they all went to dinner. The business recommenced with a race between a London boat and the winner of yesterday’s heat, Cambridge. Here the truth of Edward’s remark appeared. The Cambridge boat was too light for the men, and kept burying her nose; the London craft, under a heavy crew, floated like a cork. The Londoners soon found out their advantage, and, overrating it, steered into their opponents’ water prematurely, in spite of a warning voice from the bank. Cambridge saw, and cracked on for a foul; and for about a minute it was anybody’s race. But the Londoners pulled gallantly, and just scraped clear ahead. This peril escaped, they kept their backs straight, and a clear lead to the finish. Cambridge followed a few feet in

their wake, pulling wonderfully fast to the end, but a trifle out of form, and much distressed.

At this both universities looked blue, their humble aspiration being, first, to beat off all the external world, and then tackle each other for the prize.

Just before Edward left his friends for "the sculls," the final heat, a note was brought to him. He ran his eye over it, and threw it open into his sister's lap. The ladies read it. Its writer had won a prize poem, and so now is our time to get a hint for composition: —

DEAR SIR, — Oxford must win something. Suppose we go in for these sculls. You are a horse that can stay; Silcock is hot for the lead at starting, I hear so I mean to work him out of wind; then you can wait on us, and pick up the race. My head is not well enough to-day to win, but I am good to pump the cockney; he is quick, but a little stale. Yours truly,

ALFRED HARDIE.

Mrs. Dodd remarked that the language was sadly figurative; but she hoped Edward might be successful, in spite of his correspondent's style.

Julia said she did not dare hope it. "The race is not always to the slowest and the dearest." This was in allusion to yesterday's "foul."

The skiffs started down at the island; and, as they were longer coming up than the eight-oars, she was in a fever for nearly ten minutes; at last, near the opposite bank, up came the two leading skiffs struggling, both men visibly exhausted; Silcock ahead, but his rudder overlapped by Hardie's bow; each in his own water.

"We are third," sighed Julia, and turned her head away from the river, sorrowfully; but only for a moment, for she felt Mrs. Dodd start and press her arm; and lo! Edward's skiff was shooting swiftly across from their side of the river. He was pulling just within him-

self, in beautiful form, and with far more elasticity than the other two had got left. As he passed his mother and sister, his eyes seemed to strike fire, and he laid out all his powers, and went at the leading skiffs hand over head. There was a yell of astonishment and delight from both sides of the Thames. He passed Hardie, who upon that relaxed his speed. In thirty seconds more he was even with Silcock; then came a keen struggle: but the new-comer was "the horse that could stay;" he drew steadily ahead, and the stern of his boat was in a line with Silcock's person, when the gun fired, and a fearful roar from the bridge, the river, and the banks, announced that the favorite university had picked up the sculls in the person of Dodd of Exeter.

In due course he brought the little silver sculls, and pinned them on his mother.

While she and Julia were telling him how proud they were, and how happy they should be, but for their fears that he would hurt himself, beating gentlemen ever so much older than himself, came two Exeter men with wild looks hunting for him. "O Dodd! Hardie wants you directly."

"Don't you go, Edward," whispered Julia; "why should you be at Mr. Hardie's beck and call? I never heard of such a thing. That youth *will* make me hate him."

"Oh, I think I had better just go and see what it is about," replied Edward; "I shall be back directly." And on this understanding he went off with the men.

Half an hour passed; an hour; two hours; and he did not return. Mrs. Dodd and Julia sat wondering what had become of him, and were looking all around, and getting uneasy, when at last they did hear something about him, but indirectly, and from an unexpected quarter. A tall young man in a jersey and flannel trousers,

and a little straw hat, with a purple rosette, came away from the bustle to the more secluded part where they sat, and made eagerly for the Thames, as if he was a duck, and going in. But at the brink he flung himself into a sitting posture, and dipped his white handkerchief into the stream, then tied it viciously round his brow, doubled himself up, with his head in his hands, and rocked himself like an old woman — minus the patience, of course.

Mrs. Dodd and Julia, sitting but a few paces behind him, interchanged a look of intelligence. The young gentleman was a stranger; but they had recognized a faithful old acquaintance at the bottom of his pantomime. They discovered, too, that the afflicted one was a personage: for he had not sat there long when quite a little band of men came after him. Observing his semi-circularity and general condition, they hesitated a moment, and then one of them remonstrated eagerly. "For Heaven's sake, come back to the boat! there is a crowd of all the colleges come round us; and they all say Oxford is being sold; we had a chance for the four-ored race, and you are throwing it away."

"What do I care what they all say?" was the answer, delivered with a kind of plaintive snarl.

"But we care."

"Care then! I pity you." And he turned his back fiercely on them, and then groaned by way of half apology. Another tried him: "Come, give us a civil answer, please."

"People that intrude upon a man's privacy, racked with pain, have no right to demand civility," replied the sufferer more gently, but sullenly enough.

"Do you call this privacy?"

"It was, a minute ago. Do you think I left the boat, and came here among the natives, for company? and noise? With my head splitting."

Here Julia gave Mrs. Dodd a soft pinch, to which Mrs. Dodd replied by a smile. And so they settled who this petulant young invalid must be.

"There, it is no use," observed one, *sotto voce*, "the bloke really has awful headaches, like a girl, and then he always shuts up this way. You will only rile him, and get the rough side of his tongue."

Here, then, the conference drew towards a close. But a Wadham man, who was one of the ambassadors, interposed. "Stop a minute," said he. "Mr. Hardie, I have not the honor to be acquainted with you, and I am not here to annoy you, nor to be affronted by you. But the university has a stake in this race, and the university expostulates through us: through me, if you like."

"Who have I the honor?" inquired Hardie, assuming politeness sudden and vast.

"Badham, of Wadham."

"Badham o' Wadham? Hear that, ye tuneful nine! Well, Badham o' Wadham, you are no acquaintance of mine; so you may possibly not be a fool. Let us assume by way of hypothesis that you are a man of sense, a man of reason as well as of rhyme. Then follow my logic. Hardie of Exeter is a good man in a boat when he has not got a headache.

"When he has got a headache, Hardie of Exeter is not worth a straw in a boat.

"Hardie of Exeter has a headache now.

"*Ergo*, the university would put the said Hardie into a race, headache and all, and reduce defeat to a certainty.

"And, *ergo*, on the same premises, I, not being an egotist, nor an ass, have taken Hardie of Exeter and his headache out of the boat, as I should have done any other cripple.

"Secondly, I have put the best man on the river into this cripple's place.

“Total, I have given the university the benefit of my brains; and the university, not having brains enough to see what it gains by the exchange, turns again and rends me, like an animal frequently mentioned in Scripture; but, *nota bene*, never once with approbation.”

And the afflicted rhetorician attempted a diabolical grin, but failed signally, and groaned instead.

“Is this your answer to the university, sir?”

At this query, delivered in a somewhat threatening tone, the invalid sat up all in a moment, like a poked lion. “Oh, if Badham o’ Wadham thinks to crush me *auctoritate suâ et totius universitatis*, Badham o’ Wadham may just tell the whole university to go and be d—d, from the chancellor down to the junior cook at Skimmery Hall, with my compliments.”

“Ill-conditioned brute!” muttered Badham of Wadham. “Serve you right if the university were to chuck you into the Thames.” And with this comment they left him to his ill-temper. One remained; sat quietly down a little way off; struck a sweetly aromatic lucifer; and blew a noisome cloud, but the only one which betokens calm.

As for Hardie, he held his aching head over his knees, absorbed in pain, and quite unconscious that sacred pity was poisoning the air beside him, and two pair of dove-like eyes resting on him with womanly concern.

Mrs. Dodd and Julia had heard the greatest part of this colloquy. They had terribly quick ears, and nothing better to do with them just then. Indeed, their interest was excited.

Julia went so far as to put her salts into Mrs. Dodd’s hand with a little earnest look. But Mrs. Dodd did not act upon the hint; she had learned who the young man was; had his very name been strange to her, she would have been more at her ease with him. Moreover, his

rudeness to the other men repelled her a little; above all, he had uttered a monosyllable, and a stinger; a thorn of speech not in her vocabulary, nor even in society's. Those might be his manners, even when not aching. Still, it seems a feather would have turned the scale in his favor: for she whispered, "I have a great mind; if I could but catch his eye."

While feminine pity and social reserve were holding the balance so nicely, and nonsensically, about half a split straw, one of the racing four-oars went down close under the Berkshire bank. "London!" observed Hardie's adherent.

"What, are you there, old fellow?" murmured Hardie, in a faint voice. "Now, that is like a friend, a real friend, to sit by me, and not make a row. Thank you! thank you!"

Presently the Cambridge four-oar passed: it was speedily followed by the Oxford; the last came down in mid-stream, and Hardie eyed it keenly as it passed. "There," he cried, "was I wrong? There is a swing for you: there is a stroke. I did not know what a treasure I had got sitting behind me."

The ladies looked, and lo! the lauded stroke of the four-oar was their Edward.

"Sing out, and tell him it is not like the sculls. He must fight for the lead, at starting, and hold it with his eyelids when he has got it."

The adherent bawled this at Edward, and Edward's reply came ringing back in a clear, cheerful voice, "We mean to try all we know."

"What is the odds?" inquired the invalid faintly.

"Even on London; two to one against Cambridge; three to one against us."

"Take all my tin, and lay it on," sighed the sufferer.

"Fork it out, then. Hallo! eighteen pounds? Fancy

having eighteen pounds at the end of term ; I'll get the odds up at the bridge directly. Here's a lady offering you her smelling-bottle."

Hardie rose and turned round, and sure enough there were two ladies seated in their carriage at some distance : one of whom was holding him out three pretty little things enough, — a little smile, a little blush, and a little cut-glass bottle with a gold cork. The last panegyric on Edward had turned the scale.

Hardie went slowly up to the side of the carriage, and took off his hat to them with a half-bewildered air. Now that he was so near, his face showed very pale : the more so that his neck was a good deal tanned ; his eyelids were rather swollen, and his young eyes troubled and almost filmy with the pain. The ladies saw, and their gentle bosoms were touched ; they had heard of him as a victorious young Apollo trampling on all difficulties of mind and body ; and they saw him wan, and worn, with feminine suffering : the contrast made him doubly interesting.

Arrived at the side of the carriage, he almost started at Julia's beauty. It was sun-like, and so were her two lovely earnest eyes, beaming soft pity on him with an eloquence he had never seen in human eyes before ; for Julia's were mirrors of herself : they did nothing by halves.

He looked at her and her mother, and blushed, and stood irresolute awaiting their commands. This sudden contrast to his petulance with his own sex paved the way. "You have a sad headache, sir," said Mrs. Dodd ; "oblige me by trying my salts."

He thanked her in a low voice.

"And, mamma," inquired Julia, "ought he to sit in the sun ?"

"Certainly not. You had better sit there, sir, and profit by our shade and our parasols."



“ TOOK OFF HIS HAT TO THEM.”

“Yes, mamma, but you know the real place where he ought to be is bed.”

“Oh, pray don't say that,” implored the patient.

But Julia continued, with unabated severity, —

“And that is where he would go this minute, if I was his mamma.”

“Instead of his junior, and a stranger,” said Mrs. Dodd, somewhat coldly, dwelling with a very slight monitory emphasis on the “stranger.”

Julia said nothing, but drew in perceptibly, and was dead silent ever after.

“O madam!” said Hardie eagerly, “I do not dispute her authority, nor yours. You have a right to send me where you please, after your kindness in noticing my infernal head, and doing me the honor to speak to me, and lending me this. But if I go to bed, my head will be my master. Besides, I shall throw away what little chance I have of making your acquaintance; and the race just coming off!”

“We will not usurp authority, sir,” said Mrs. Dodd quietly; “but we know what a severe headache is, and should be glad to see you sit still in the shade, and excite yourself as little as possible.”

“Yes, madam,” said the youth humbly, and sat down like a lamb. He glanced now and then at the island, and now and then peered up at the radiant young mute beside him.

The silence continued till it was broken by — a fish out of water. An undergraduate in spectacles came mooning along, all out of his element. It was Mr. Kennet, who used to rise at four every morning to his Plato, and walk up Shotover Hill every afternoon, wet or dry, to cool his eyes for his evening work. With what view he deviated to Henley has not yet been ascertained; he was blind as a bat, and did not care a button

about any earthly boat-race, except the one in the *Æneid*, even if he could have seen one. However, nearly all the men of his college went to Henley, and perhaps some branch, hitherto unexplored, of animal magnetism drew him after. At any rate, there was his body; and his mind at Oxford and Athens, and other venerable but irrelevant cities. He brightened at sight of his doge, and asked him warmly if he had heard the news.

"No; what? Nothing wrong, I hope?"

"Why, two of our men are ploughed, that is all," said Kennet, affecting with withering irony to undervalue his intelligence.

"Confound it, Kennet, how you frightened me! I was afraid there was some screw loose with the crew."

At this very instant the smoke of the pistol was seen to puff out from the island, and Hardie rose to his feet. "They are off!" cried he to the ladies, and after first putting his palms together with a hypocritical look of apology, he laid one hand on an old barge that was drawn up ashore, and sprang like a mountain goat on to the bow, lighting on the very gunwale. The position was not tenable an instant, but he extended one foot very nimbly and boldly, and planted it on the other gunwale; and there he was in a moment, headache and all, in an attitude as large and inspired as the boldest gesture antiquity has committed to marble: he had even the advantage in stature over most of the sculptured forms of Greece. But a double opera-glass at his eye "spoiled the lot," as Mr. Punch says.

I am not to repeat the particulars of a distant race coming nearer and nearer. The main features are always the same, only this time it was more exciting to our fair friends, on account of Edward's high stake in it. And then their grateful though refractory patient, an authority in their eyes, indeed all but a river-god, stood

poised in air, and in excited whispers interpreted each distant and unintelligible feature down to them :—

“Cambridge was off quickest.

“But not much.

“Anybody’s race at present, madam.

“If this lasts long, we may win. None of them can stay like us.

“Come, the favorite is not so very dangerous.

“Cambridge looks best.

“I wouldn’t change with either, so far.

“Now, in forty seconds more, I shall be able to pick out the winner.”

Julia went up this ladder of thrills to a high state of excitement ; and, indeed, they were all so tuned to racing pitch, that some metal nerve or other seemed to jar inside all three, when the piercing, grating voice of Kennet broke in suddenly with, —

“How do you construe *γαστριμαργος* ?”

The wretch had burrowed in the intellectual ruins of Greece the moment the pistol went off, and college chat ceased. Hardie raised his opera-glass, and his first impulse was to brain the judicious Kennet, gazing up to him for an answer, with spectacles goggling like supernatural eyes of dead sophists in the sun.

“How do you construe ‘*Hoc age,*’ you incongruous dog ? Hold your tongue, and mind the race.

“There, I thought so. Where’s your three to one, now ? The cockneys are out of this event, any way. Go on, universities, and order their suppers !”

“But which is first, sir ?” asked Julia, imploringly.

“Oh, which is first of all ?”

“Neither. Never mind, it looks well. London is pumped ; and if Cambridge can’t lead him before this turn in the river, the race will be ours. Now, look out ! By Jove, we are *ahead* !”

The leading boats came on, Oxford pulling a long, lofty, sturdy stroke, that seemed as if it never could compete with the quick action of its competitor. Yet it was undeniably ahead, and gaining at every swing.

Young Hardie writhed on his perch. He screeched at them across the Thames, "Well pulled, Stroke! Well pulled all! Splendidly pulled, Dodd! You are walking away from them altogether. Hurrah! Oxford forever, hurrah!" The gun went off over the heads of the Oxford crew in advance, and even Mrs. Dodd and Julia could see the race was theirs.

"We have won at last," cried Julia, all on fire, "and fairly; only think of that!"

Hardie turned round, grateful to beauty for siding with his university. "Yes, and the fools may thank me, or rather my man Dodd. Dodd forever! Hurrah!"

At this climax even Mrs. Dodd took a gentle share in the youthful enthusiasm that was boiling around her, and her soft eyes sparkled, and she returned the fervid pressure of her daughter's hand; and both their faces were flushed with gratified pride and affection.

"Dodd!" broke in "the incongruous dog," with a voice just like a saw's; "Dodd? Ah, that's the man who is just ploughed for smalls."

Ice has its thunderbolts.

CHAPTER II.

WINNING boat-races was all very fine; but a hundred such victories could not compensate Mr. Kennet's female hearers for one such defeat as he had announced, — a defeat that, to their minds, carried disgrace. Their Edward plucked! At first they were benumbed, and sat chilled, with red cheeks, bewildered between present triumph and mortification at hand. Then the color ebbed out of their faces, and they encouraged each other feebly in whispers, "Might it not be a mistake?"

But unconscious Kennet robbed them of this timid hope. He was now in his element, knew all about it, rushed into details, and sawed away all doubt from their minds. The sum was this. Dodd's general performance was mediocre, but passable: he was plucked for his logic. Hardie said he was very sorry for it. "What does it matter?" answered Kennet; "he is a boating man."

"Well, and I am a boating man. Why, you told me yourself, the other day, poor Dodd was anxious about it on account of his friends. And, by-the-by, that reminds me, they say he has got two pretty sisters here."

Says Kennet briskly, "I'll go and tell him; I know him just to speak to."

"What, doesn't he know?"

"How can he know?" said Kennet jealously; "the testamurs were only just out as I came away." And with this he started on his congenial errand.

Hardie took two or three of his long strides, and fairly collared him. "You will do nothing of the kind."

“What, not tell a man when he’s ploughed? That is a good joke.”

“No; there’s time enough. Tell him after chapel to-morrow, or *in* chapel, if you must: but why poison his triumphal cup? And his sisters, too, why spoil their pleasure? Hang it all, not a word about ‘ploughing’ to any living soul to-day!”

To his surprise, Kennet’s face expressed no sympathy, nor even bare assent. At this Hardie lost patience, and burst out impetuously, “Take care how you refuse me; take care how you thwart me in this. He is the best-natured fellow in college. It doesn’t matter to you, and it does to him; and if you *do*, then take my name off the list of your acquaintance, for I’ll never speak a word to you again in this world; no, not on my death-bed, by Heaven!”

The threat was extravagant; but youth’s glowing cheek and eye, and imperious lip, and simple generosity, made it almost beautiful.

Kennet whined, “Oh! if you talk like that, there is an end to fair argument.”

“End it, then; and promise me, upon your honor.”

“Why not? What bosh! There, I promise. Now, how do you construe *χυμνοπριστης*?”

The incongruous dog (“I thank thee, Taff, for teaching me that word”) put this query with the severity of an inquisitor bringing back a garrulous prisoner to the point. Hardie replied gayly, “Any way you like, now you are a good fellow again.”

“Come, that is evasive. My tutor says it cannot be rendered by any one English word; no more can *γαστριμαργος*.”

“Why, what on earth can he know about English? *γαστριμαργος* is a Cormorant; *χυμνοπριστης* is a Skinflint; and your tutor is a Duffer. Hush! Keep dark, now!

here he comes." And he went hastily to meet Edward Dodd, and by that means intercepted him on his way to the carriage. "Give me your hand, Dodd," he cried; "you have saved the university. You must be stroke of the eight-oar after me. Let me see more of you than I have, old fellow."

"With all my heart," replied Edward, calmly, but taking the offered hand cordially, though he rather wanted to get away to his mother and sister. "We will pull together, and read together into the bargain," continued Hardie.

"Read together? You and I? What do you mean?"

"Well, you see, I am pretty well up in the higher books; what I have got to rub up is my divinity and my logic, especially my logic. Will you grind logic with me? Say 'Yes,' for I know you will keep your word."

"It is too good an offer to refuse, Hardie; but now I look at you, you are excited, wonderfully excited, with the race, eh? Now, just — you — wait — quietly — till next week, and then if you are so soft as to ask me in cool blood" —

"Wait a week?" cried the impetuous youth. "No, not a minute. It is settled. There, we cram logic together next term."

And he shook Edward's hand again with glistening eyes and an emotion that was quite unintelligible to Edward; but not to the quick, sensitive spirits, who sat but fifteen yards off.

"You really must excuse me just now," said Edward, and ran to the carriage, and put out both hands to the fair occupants. They kissed him eagerly, with little tender sighs; and it cost them no slight effort not to cry publicly over "the beloved," "the victorious," "the ploughed."

Young Hardie stood petrified. What? these ladies

Dodd's sisters! Why, one of them had called the other mamma. Good Heavens! all his talk in their hearing had been of Dodd; and Kennet and he between them had let out the very thing he wanted to conceal, especially from Dodd's relations. He gazed at them, and turned hot to the very forehead. Then, not knowing what to do or say, and being, after all, but a clever boy, not a cool "never unready" man of the world, he slipped away, blushing. Kennet followed, goggling.

Left to herself, Mrs. Dodd would have broken the bad news to Edward at once, and taken the line of consoling him under her own vexation: it would not have been the first time that she had played that card. But young Mr. Hardie had said it would be unkind to poison Edward's day, and it is sweet woman's nature to follow suit; so she and Julia put bright faces on, and Edward passed a right jocund afternoon with them; he was not allowed to surprise one of the looks they interchanged to relieve their secret mortification. But, after dinner, as the time drew near for him to go back to Oxford, Mrs. Dodd became silent and a little *distracte*; and at last drew her chair away to a small table, and wrote a letter.

In directing it she turned it purposely, so that Julia could catch the address: "*Edward Dodd, Esq., Exeter College, Oxford.*"

Julia was naturally startled at first, and her eye roved almost comically to and fro the letter and its destination seated calm and unconscious of woman's beneficent wiles. But her heart soon divined the mystery; it was to reach him the first thing in the morning, and spare him the pain of writing the news to them; and, doubtless, so worded as not to leave him a day in doubt of their forgiveness and sympathy.

Julia took the missive, unobserved by the destination, and glided out of the room to get it quietly posted.

The servant girl was waiting on the second-floor lodgers, and told her so, with a significant addition; viz., that the post was in this street, and only a few doors off. Julia was a little surprised at her coolness, but took the hint with perfect good temper, and just put on her shawl and bonnet, and went with it herself. The post-office was not quite so near as represented; but she was soon there, for she was eager till she had posted it; but she came back slowly and thoughtfully; here in the street, lighted only by the moon, and an occasional gas-light, there was no need of self-restraint, and soon her mortification betrayed itself in her speaking countenance. And to think that her mother, on whom she doted, should have to write to her son, there present, and post the letter! This made her eyes fill, and before she reached the door of the lodging, they were brimming over.

As she put her foot on the step, a timid voice addressed her in a low tone of supplication. "May I venture to speak one word to you, Miss Dodd? one single word?"

She looked up surprised; and it was young Mr. Hardie.

His tall figure was bending towards her submissively, and his face, as well as his utterance, betrayed considerable agitation.

And what led to so unusual a *rencontre* between a young gentleman and lady who had never been introduced?

"The tender passion," says a reader of many novels.

Why, yes; the tenderest in all our nature, —

Wounded vanity.

Naturally proud and sensitive, and inflated by success and flattery, Alfred Hardie had been torturing himself ever since he fled Edward's female relations. He was mortified to the core. He confounded "the fools" (his favorite synonym for his acquaintance) for going and calling Dodd's mother an elder sister, and so not giving

him a chance to divine her. And then that he, who prided himself on his discrimination, should take them for ladies of rank, or, at all events, of the highest fashion; and, climax of humiliation, that so great a man as he should go and seem to court them by praising Dodd of Exeter, by enlarging upon Dodd of Exeter, by offering to grind logic with Dodd of Exeter. Who would believe that this was a coincidence, a mere coincidence? They could not be expected to believe it; female vanity would not let them. He tingled, and was not far from hating the whole family; so bitter a thing is that which I have ventured to dub "the tenderest passion." He itched to soothe his irritation by explaining to Edward. Dodd was a frank, good-hearted fellow; he would listen to facts, and convince the ladies in turn. Hardie learned where Dodd's party lodged, and waited about the door to catch him alone. Dodd must be in college by twelve, and would leave Henley before ten. He waited till he was tired of waiting; but at last the door opened. He stepped forward, and out tripped Miss Dodd. "Confound it!" muttered Hardie, and drew back. However, he stood and admired her graceful figure and action, her ladylike speed without bustling. Had she come back at the same pace, he would never have ventured to stop her: on such a thread do things hang; but she returned very slowly hanging her head. Her look at him and his headache recurred to him, a look brimful of goodness. She would do as well as Edward, better perhaps. He yielded to impulse, and addressed her, but with all the trepidation of a youth defying the giant etiquette for the first time in his life.

Julia was a little surprised and fluttered, but did not betray it. She had been taught self-command by example, if not by precept.

"Certainly, Mr. Hardie," said she, with a modest com-

posure a young coquette might have envied under the circumstances.

Hardie had now only to explain himself; but instead of that, he stood looking at her with silent concern. The fair face she raised to him was wet with tears; so were her eyes, and even the glorious eyelashes were fringed with that tender spray; and it glistened in the moonlight.

This sad and pretty sight drove the vain but generous youth's calamity clean out of his head. "Why, you are crying! Miss Dodd, what is the matter? I hope nothing has happened."

Julia turned her head away a little fretfully, with a "No, no." But soon her natural candor and simplicity prevailed: a simplicity not without dignity. She turned round to him, and looked him in the face. "Why should I deny it to you, sir, who have been good enough to sympathize with us? We *are* mortified, sadly mortified, at dear Edward's disgrace; and it has cost us a struggle not to disobey you, and *poison his triumphal cup* with sad looks. And mamma had to write to him, and console him against to-morrow; but I hope he will not feel it so severely as she does; and I have just posted it myself, and, when I thought of our dear mamma being driven to such expedients, I—oh!" And the pure young heart, having opened itself by words, must flow a little more.

"Oh! pray, don't cry," said young Hardie, tenderly; "don't take such a trifle to heart so. You crying makes me feel guilty for letting it happen. It shall never occur again. If I had only known, it should never have happened at all."

"Once is enough," sighed Julia.

"Indeed you take it too much to heart; it is only out of Oxford a plough is thought much of, especially a single one, that is so very common. You see, Miss Dodd, an university examination consists of several items; neglect

but one, and Crichton himself would be ploughed; because brilliancy in your other papers is not allowed to count; that is how the most distinguished man of our day got ploughed for smalls. I had a narrow escape, I know, for one. But, Miss Dodd, if you knew how far your brother's performance on the river outweighs a mere slip in the schools in all university men's eyes, the dons' and all, you would not make this bright day end sadly to Oxford by crying. Why, I could find you a thousand men who would be ploughed to-morrow with glory and delight to win one such race as your brother has won two."

Julia sighed again. But it sounded now half like a sigh of relief; the final sigh, with which the fair consent to be consoled.

And, indeed, this improvement in the music did not escape Hardie; he felt he was on the right tack. He enumerated fluently, and by name, many good men, besides Dean Swift, who had been ploughed, yet had cultivated the field of letters in their turn; and, in short, he was so earnest and plausible, that something like a smile hovered about his hearer's lips, and she glanced askant at him with furtive gratitude from under her silky lashes. But it soon recurred to her that this was rather a long interview to accord to "a stranger," and under the moon; so she said a little stiffly, "And was this what you were good enough to wish to say to me, Mr. Hardie?"

"No, Miss Dodd, to be frank, it was not. My motive in addressing you, without the right to take such a freedom, was egotistical. I came here to clear myself. I—I was afraid you must think me a humbug, you know."

"I do not understand you, indeed."

"Well, I feared you and Mrs. Dodd might think I praised Dodd so, and did what little I did for him, knowing who you were, and wishing to curry favor with you

by all that; and that is so underhand and paltry a way of going to work, I should despise myself."

"O Mr. Hardie!" said the young lady, smiling, "how foolish! Why, of course we knew you had no idea."

"Indeed I had not; but how could you know it?"

"Why, we saw it. Do you think we have no eyes? ah! and much keener ones than gentlemen have. It is mamma and I who are to blame, if anybody; we ought to have declared ourselves; it would have been more generous, more — manly. But we cannot all be gentlemen, you know. It was so sweet to hear Edward praised by one who did not know us: it was like stolen fruit; and by one whom others praise; so, if you can forgive us our slyness, there is an end of the matter."

"Forgive you? you have taken a thorn out of my soul."

"Then, I am so glad you summoned courage to speak to me without ceremony. Mamma would have done better though; but, after all, do not I know her? My mamma is all goodness and intelligence; and be assured, sir, she does you justice; and is quite sensible of your *disinterested* kindness to dear Edward." With this she was about to retire.

"Ah! But you, Miss Dodd? with whom I have taken this unwarrantable liberty?" said Hardie, imploringly.

"Me, Mr. Hardie? you do me the honor to require my opinion of your performances, including, of course, this self-introduction?"

Hardie hung his head; there was a touch of satire in the lady's voice, he thought.

Her soft eyes rested demurely on him a moment; she saw he was a little abashed.

"My opinion of it all is that you have been very kind to us, in being most kind to our poor Edward. I never saw nor read of anything more generous, more manly.

And then, *so* thoughtful, *so* considerate, *so* delicate ! So, instead of criticising you, as you seem to expect, his sister only blesses you, and thanks you from the very bottom of her heart."

She had begun with a polite composure borrowed from mamma ; but, once launched, her ardent nature got the better ; her color rose and rose, and her voice sank and sank, and the last words came almost in a whisper ; and such a lovely whisper : a gurgle from the heart ; and, as she concluded, her delicate hand came sweeping out with a heaven-taught gesture of large and sovereign cordiality, that made even the honest words and the divine tones more eloquent. It was too much ; the young man, ardent as herself, and not, in reality, half so timorous, caught fire ; and, seeing a white, eloquent hand rather near him, caught it, and pressed his warm lips on it in mute adoration and gratitude.

At this she was scared and offended. "Oh ! keep that for the Queen !" cried she, turning scarlet, and tossing her fair head into the air, like a startled stag, and she drew her hand away quickly and decidedly, though not roughly. He stammered a lowly apology ; in the very middle of it she said quietly, "Good-by, Mr. Hardie," and swept with a gracious little courtesy through the doorway, leaving him spellbound.

And so the virginal instinct of self-defence carried her off swiftly and cleverly. But none too soon ; for, on entering the house, that external composure her two mothers, Mesdames Dodd and Nature, had taught her, fell from her like a veil, and she fluttered up the stairs to her own room with hot cheeks, and panted there like some wild thing that has been grasped at and grazed. She felt young Hardie's lips upon the palm of her hand plainly ; they seemed to linger there still ; it was like light, but live velvet. This, and the ardent look he had

poured into her eyes, set the young creature quivering. Nobody had looked at her so before, and no young gentleman had imprinted living velvet on her hand. She was alarmed, ashamed, and uneasy. What right had he to look at her like that? What shadow of a right to go and kiss her hand? He could not pretend to think she had put it out to be kissed; ladies put forth the back of the hand for that, not the palm. The truth was, he was an impudent fellow, and she hated him now, and herself too, for being so simple as to let him talk to her; mamma would not have been so imprudent when she was a girl.

She would not go down, for she felt there must be something of this kind legibly branded on her face: "Oh! oh! just look at this young lady! She has been letting a young gentleman kiss the palm of her hand; and the feel has not gone off yet; you may see that by her cheeks."

But, then, poor Edward! she must go down.

So she put a wet towel to her tell-tale cheeks, and dried them by artistic dabs, avoiding friction, and came down-stairs like a mouse, and turned the door-handle noiselessly, and glided into the sitting-room looking so transparent, conscious, and all on fire with beauty and animation, that even Edward was startled, and, in a whisper, bade his mother observe what a pretty girl she was; "Beats all the county girls in a canter." Mrs. Dodd did look; and, consequently, as soon as ever Edward was gone to Oxford, she said to Julia, "You are feverish, love; you have been excited with all this. You had better go to bed."

Julia complied willingly, for she wanted to be alone and think. She retired to her own room, and went the whole day over again; and was happy and sorry, exalted and uneasy, by turns; and ended by excusing Mr. Hardie's escapade, and throwing the blame on herself.

She ought to have been more distant; gentlemen were not expected, nor, indeed, much wanted, to be modest. A little assurance did not misbecome them. "Really, I think it sets them off," said she to herself.

Grand total: "What *must* he think of me?"

Time gallops in reverie; the town clock struck twelve, and with its iron tongue, remorse entered her youthful conscience. Was this obeying mamma? Mamma had said, "Go to bed," not, "Go up-stairs and meditate upon young gentlemen." She gave an expressive shake of her fair shoulders, like a swan flapping the water off its downy wings, and so dismissed the subject from her mind.

Then she said her prayers.

Then she rose from her knees, and, in tones of honey, said, "Puss! puss! pretty puss!" and awaited a result.

Thieves and ghosts she did not believe in, yet credited cats under beds, and thought them neither "harmless" nor "necessary" there.

After tenderly evoking the dreaded and chimerical quadruped, she proceeded none the less to careful research, especially of cupboards. The door of one resisted, and then yielded with a crack, and blew out the candle. "There now," said she.

It was her only light, except her beauty. They allotted each Hebe but one candle, in that ancient burgh. "Well," she thought, "there is moonlight enough to *undress* by." She went to draw back one of the curtains; but in the act she started back with a little scream. There was a tall figure over the way watching the house.

The moon shone from her side of the street full on him, and in that instant her quick eye recognized Mr. Hardie.

"Well!" said she aloud, and with an indescribable inflection; and hid herself swiftly in impenetrable gloom.

But, after awhile, Eve's daughter must have a peep. She stole with infinite caution to one side of the curtain, and made an aperture just big enough for one bright eye. Yes, there he was, motionless. "I'll tell mamma," said she to him, malignantly, as if the sound could reach him.

Unconscious of the direful threat, he did not budge.

She was unaffectedly puzzled at this phenomenon; and, not being the least vain, fell to wondering whether he played the nightly sentinel opposite every lady's window, who exchanged civilities with him. "Because, if he does, he is a fool," said she, promptly. But on reflection, she felt sure he did nothing of the kind habitually, for he had too high an opinion of himself; she had noted that trait in him at a very early stage. She satisfied herself, by cautious examination, that he did not know her room. He was making a temple of the whole lodging. "How ridiculous of him!" Yet he appeared to be happy over it; there was an exalted look on his moonlit face: she seemed now first to see his soul there. She studied his countenance like an inscription, and deciphered each rapt expression that crossed it, and stored them in her memory.

Twice she left her ambuscade to go to bed; and twice curiosity, or something, drew her back. At last, having looked, peered, and peeped, till her feet were cold, and her face the reverse, she informed herself that the foolish thing had tired her out.

"Good-night, Mr. Policeman," said she, pretending to bawl to him. "And, oh, do rain! As hard as ever you can." With this benevolent aspiration, a little too violent to be sincere, she laid her cheek on her pillow doughtily.

But her sentinel, when out of sight, had more power to disturb her. She lay and wondered whether he was still there, and what it all meant, and whatever mamma

would say ; and which of the two, she or he, was the head culprit in this strange performance, to which earth, she conceived, had seen no parallel ; and, above all, what he would do next. Her pulse galloped, and her sleep was broken, and she came down in the morning a little pale. Mrs. Dodd saw it at once, with the quick maternal eye, and moralized : “ It is curious ; youth is so fond of pleasure ; yet pleasure seldom agrees with youth ; this little excitement has done your mother good, who is no longer young ; but it has been too much for you. I shall be glad to have you back to our quiet home.”

Ah ! Will that home be as tranquil now ?

CHAPTER III.

THE long vacation commenced about a month afterwards, and Hardie came to his father's house, to read for honors, unimpeded by university races and college lectures; and the ploughed and penitent one packed up his Aldrich and his Whately, the then authorities in logic, and brought them home, together with a firm resolution to master that joyous science before the next examination for smalls in October. But, lo! ere he had been an hour at home, he found his things put neatly away in his drawers on the feminine or vertical system — deep strata of waistcoats, strata of trousers, strata of coats, strata of papers — and his logic gone.

In the course of the evening he taxed his sister good-humoredly, and asked "what earthly use that book was to her, not wearing curls."

"I intend to read it, and study it, and teach you it," replied Julia, rather languidly — considering the weight of the resolve.

"Oh, if you have boned it to read, I say no more; the crime will punish itself."

"Be serious, Edward, and think of mamma! I cannot sit with my hands before me, and let you be reploughed."

"I don't want. But — reploughed! haw, haw! but you can't help me at logic as you used at syntax. Why, all the world knows a girl can't learn logic."

"A girl can learn anything she chooses to learn. What she can't learn is things other people set her down to." Before Edward could fully digest this revelation, she gave the argument a new turn, by adding fretfully,

“And don't be so unkind, thwarting and teasing me!” and all in a moment she was crying.

“Halloa!” ejaculated Edward, taken quite by surprise. “What is the matter, dears?” inquired maternal vigilance from the other end of the room. “You did not speak brusquely to her, Edward?”

“No, no,” said Julia eagerly. “It is I that am turned so cross and so peevish. I am quite a changed girl. Mamma, what *is* the matter with me?” And she laid her brow on her mother's bosom.

Mrs. Dodd caressed the lovely head soothingly with one hand, and made a sign over it to Edward to leave them alone. She waited quietly till Julia was composed, and then said softly, “Come, tell me what it is; nothing that Edward said to you, for I heard almost every word, and I was just going to smile, or nearly, when you— And, my love, it is not the first time, you know; I would not tell Edward, but I have more than once seen your eyes with tears in them.”

“Have you, mamma?” said Julia, scarcely above a whisper.

“Why, you know I have. But I said to myself it was no use forcing confidence. I thought I would be very patient, and wait till you came to me with it; so now, what is it, my darling? Why do you speak of one thing and think of another, and cry without any reason that your mother can see?”

“I don't know, mamma,” said Julia, hiding her head. “I think it is because I sleep so badly. I rise in the morning hot and quivering, and more tired than I lay down.”

Mrs. Dodd inquired how long this had been.

Julia did not answer this question; she went on, with her face still hidden, “Mamma, I do feel so depressed and hysterical, or else in violent spirits; but not nice

and cheerful as you are, and I used to be ; and I go from one thing to another, and can settle to nothing ; even in church I attend by fits and starts : I forgot to water my very flowers last night, and I heard Mrs. Maxley out of my window tell Sarah I am losing my color. Am I ? But what does it matter ? I am losing my sense, for I catch myself forever looking in the glass, and that is a sure sign of a fool, you know ; and I cannot pass the shops ; I stand and look in, and long for the very dearest silks, and for diamonds in my hair." A deep sigh followed the confession of these multiform imperfections ; and the culprit half raised her head to watch their effect.

As for Mrs. Dodd, she opened her eyes wide with surprise ; but at the end of the heterogeneous catalogue she smiled, and said, "I cannot believe *that*. If ever there was a young lady free from personal vanity, it is my Julia. Why, your thoughts run by nature away from yourself ; you were born for others."

Her daughter kissed her gratefully, and smiled : but, after a pause, said sorrowfully, "Ah, that was the old Julia, as seen with your dear eyes. I have almost forgotten *her*. The new one is what I tell you, dear mamma, and that (with sudden fervor) is a dreamy, wandering, vain, egotistical, hysterical, abominable girl."

"Let me kiss this monster that I have brought into the world," said Mrs. Dodd. "And now let me think." She rested her eyes calm and penetrating upon her daughter ; and at this mere look, but a very searching one, the color mounted and mounted in Julia's cheek strangely.

"After all," said Mrs. Dodd, thoughtfully, "yours is a critical age ; perhaps my child is turning to a woman ; my rosebud to a rose." And she sighed. Mothers will sigh at things none other ever sighed at.

"To a weed, I fear," replied Julia. "What will you

say when I own I felt no real joy at Edward's return this time? And yesterday I cried, 'Do get away, and don't pester me!'"

"To your brother? Oh!"

"Oh, no! mamma, that was to poor Spot. He jumped on me in a reverie, all affection, poor thing."

"Well, for your comfort, dogs do not appreciate the niceties of our language."

"I am afraid they do; when we kick them."

Mrs. Dodd smiled at the admission implied here, and the deep penitence it was uttered with. But Julia remonstrated, "Oh, no! no! don't laugh at me, but help me with your advice: you are so wise and so experienced: you must have been a girl before you were an angel. You *must* know what is the matter with me. Oh, do pray cure me; or else kill me, for I cannot go on like this, all my affections deadened, and my peace disturbed."

And now the mother looked serious and thoughtful enough; and the daughter watched her furtively. "Julia," said Mrs. Dodd, very gravely, "if it was not my child, reared under my eye, and never separated from me a single day, I should say this young lady is either afflicted with some complaint, and it affects her nerves and spirits; or else she has — she is — what inexperienced young people call 'in love.' You need not look so frightened, child; nobody in their senses suspects *you* of imprudence or indelicacy; and therefore I feel quite sure that your constitution is at a crisis, or your health has suffered some shock: pray Heaven it may not be a serious one. You will have the best advice, and without delay, I promise you."

That very evening, Mrs. Dodd sent a servant into the town with a note like a cocked-hat for Mr. Osmond, a consulting surgeon, who bore a high reputation in Barkington. He came; and proved too plump for that

complete elegance she would have desired in a medical attendant, but had a soft hand, a gentle touch, and a subdued manner. He spoke to the patient with a kindness which won the mother directly; had every hope of setting her right without any violent or disagreeable remedies; but, when she had retired, altered his tone; and told Mrs. Dodd seriously she had done well to send for him in time; it was a case of "hyperæsthesia" (Mrs. Dodd clasped her hands in alarm), "or, as unprofessional persons would say, 'excessive sensibility.'"

Mrs. Dodd was somewhat relieved. Translation blunts thunderbolts. She told him she had always feared for her child on that score. But was sensibility curable? Could a nature be changed?

He replied that the idiosyncrasy could not; but its morbid excess could, especially when taken in time. Advice was generally called in too late. However, here the only serious symptom was the insomnia. "We must treat her for that," said he, writing a prescription; "but for the rest, active employment, long walks, or rides, and a change of scene and associations, will be all that will be required. In these cases," resumed Mr. Osmond, "connected as they are with hyperæmia, some medical men consider moderate venesection to be indicated." He then put on his gloves, saying, "The diet, of course, must be antiphlogistic. Let us say then, for breakfast, dry toast with very little butter—no coffee—cocoa (from the nibs), or weak tea: for luncheon, beef-tea or mutton-broth: for dinner, a slice of roast chicken, and tapioca or semolina pudding. I would give her one glass of sherry, but no more, and barley-water; it would be as well to avoid brown meats, at all events for the present. With these precautions, my dear madam, I think your anxiety will soon be happily removed."

Julia took her long walks and light diet; and became

a little pale at times, and had fewer bursts of high spirits in the intervals of depression. Her mother went with her care to a female friend. The lady said she would not trust to surgeons and apothecaries; she would have a downright physician. "Why not go to the top of the tree at once, and call in Dr. Short? You have heard of him?"

"Oh, yes; I have even met him in society; a most refined person: I will certainly follow your advice and consult him. Oh, thank you, Mrs. Bosanquet! *Apropos*, do you consider him skilful?"

"Oh, immensely; he is a particular friend of my husband's."

This was so convincing, that off went another three-cocked note, and next day a dark-green carriage and pair dashed up to Mrs. Dodd's door, and Dr. Short bent himself in an arc, got out, and slowly mounted the stairs. He was six feet two, wonderfully thin, livid, and gentleman-like. Fine long head, keen eye, lantern jaws. At sight of him Mrs. Dodd rose and smiled, Julia started and sat trembling. He stepped across the room inaudibly, and after the usual civilities, glanced at the patient's tongue, and touched her wrist delicately. "Pulse is rapid," said he.

Mrs. Dodd detailed the symptoms. Dr. Short listened with the patient politeness of a gentleman, to whom all this was superfluous. He asked for a sheet of note-paper, and divided it so gently, he seemed to be persuading one thing to be two; he wrote a pair of prescriptions, and whilst thus employed looked up every now and then and conversed with the ladies.

"You have a slight subscapular affection, Miss Dodd: I mean a little pain under the shoulder-blade."

"No, sir," said Julia, quietly.

Dr. Short looked a little surprised; his female patients

rarely contradicted him. Was it for them to disown things he was so good as to assign them?

“Ah!” said he, “you are not conscious of it: all the better; it must be slight; a mere uneasiness: no more.” He then numbered the prescriptions 1, 2, and advised Mrs. Dodd to drop No. 1 after the eighth day, and substitute No. 2, to be continued until convalescence. He put on his gloves, to leave. Mrs. Dodd, then, with some hesitation, asked him humbly whether she might ask him what the disorder was. “Certainly, madam,” said he, graciously; “your daughter is laboring under a slight torpidity of the liver. The first prescription is active, and is to clear the gland itself, and the biliary ducts, of the excretory accumulation; and the second is exhibited to promote a healthy normal habit in that important part of the vascular system.”

“What, then, it is not hyperæsthesia?”

“Hyperæsthesia? There is no such disorder in the books.”

“You surprise me,” said Mrs. Dodd. “Dr. Osmond certainly thought it was hyperæsthesia.” And she consulted her little ivory tablets whereon she had written the word.

But, meantime, Dr. Short’s mind, to judge by his countenance, was away roaming distant space in search of Osmond. “Osmond? Osmond? I do not know that name in medicine.”

“Oh, oh, oh!” cried Julia, “and they both live in the same street!” Mrs. Dodd held up her finger to this outspoken patient.

But a light seemed to break in on Dr. Short. “Ah! you mean Mr. Osmond: a surgeon. A very respectable man, a most respectable man. I do not know a more estimable person — in his grade of the profession — than my good friend Mr. Osmond. And so he gives opinions

in medical cases, does he?" Dr. Short paused, apparently to realize this phenomenon in the world of mind. He resumed in a different tone: "You may have misunderstood him. Hyperæsthesia exists, of course, since he says so. But hyperæsthesia is not a complaint; it is a symptom. Of biliary derangement. My worthy friend looks at disorders from a mental point; very natural: his interest lies that way, perhaps you are aware: but profounder experience proves that mental sanity is merely one of the results of bodily health: and I am happy to assure you that, the biliary canal once cleared, and the secretions restored to the healthy habit by these prescriptions, the hyperæsthesia, and other concomitants of hepatic derangement, will disperse, and leave our interesting patient in the enjoyment of her natural intelligence, her friends' affectionate admiration, and above all, of a sound constitution. Ladies, I have the honor" — and the doctor eked out this sentence by rising.

"Oh, thank you, Dr. Short," said Mrs. Dodd, rising with him; "you inspire me with confidence and gratitude." As if under the influence of these feelings only, she took Dr. Short's palm and pressed it. Of the two hands which met for a moment then, one was soft and melting, the other a bunch of bones; but both were very white, and so equally adroit, that a double fee passed without the possibility of a bystander suspecting it.

For the benefit of all young virgins afflicted like Julia Dodd, here are the doctor's prescriptions: —

FOR MISS DODD.

℞ Pil: Hydrarg: Chlor: Co:
singul: nocte sumend:
Decoc: Aloes Co: ℥j
omni mane.

viii. Sept. J. S.

FOR MISS DODD.

℞ Conf: Sennæ.
 Potass: Bitartrat.
 Extr: Tarax: ā ā ℥ss
 Misft: Elect: Cujus sum: ℥j omni mane.
 xviii. Sept. J. S.

Id: Anglicè reddit: per me Carol: Arundin:
 The same done into English by me. C. R.

FOR MISS DODD.

1. O Jupiter, aid us! Plummer's pill to be taken every night. 1 oz. compound decoction of Aloes every morning.
 8th Sept. J. S.

FOR MISS DODD.

2. O Jupiter, aid us! with Confection of Senna, Bitartrate of Potash, extract of Dandelion, of each half an ounce, let an electuary be mixed; of which let her take one drachm every morning.
 18th Sept. J. S.

"Quite the courtier," said Mrs. Dodd, delighted. Julia assented: she even added, with a listless yawn, "I had no idea that a skeleton was such a gentleman-like thing; I never saw one before."

Mrs. Dodd admitted he was very thin.

"Oh, no, mamma; 'thin' implies some little flesh. When he felt my pulse, a chill struck to my heart; Death in a black suit seemed to steal up to me, and lay a finger on my wrist: and mark me for his own."

Mrs. Dodd forbade her to give way to such gloomy ideas; and expostulated firmly with her for judging learned men by their bodies. "However," said she, "if the good, kind doctor's remedies do not answer his expectations and mine, I shall take you to London directly. I do hope papa will soon be at home."

Poor Mrs. Dodd was herself slipping into a morbid

state. A mother collecting doctors! It is a most fascinating kind of connoisseurship; grows on one like drink; like polemics; like melodrama; like the Millennium; like anything.

Sure enough, the very next week she and Julia sat patiently at the morning levee of an eminent and titled London-surgeon. Full forty patients were before them, so they had to wait and wait. At last they were ushered into the presence-chamber, and Mrs. Dodd entered on the beaten ground of her daughter's symptoms. The noble surgeon stopped her civilly but promptly. "Auscultation will give us the clew," said he, and drew his stethoscope. Julia shrank and cast an appealing look at her mother; but the impassive chevalier reported on each organ in turn without moving his ear from the keyhole. "Lungs pretty sound," said he, a little plaintively: "so is the liver. Now for the — Hum? There is no cardiac insufficiency, I think, neither mitral nor tricuspid. If we find no tendency to hypertrophy we shall do very well. Ah, I have succeeded in diagnosing a slight diastolic murmur; very slight." He deposited the instrument, and said, not without a certain shade of satisfaction that his research had not been fruitless, "The heart is the peccant organ."

"O sir! is it serious?" said poor Mrs. Dodd.

"By no means. Try this (he scratched a prescription which would not have misbecome the tomb of Cheops); and come again in a month." Ting! He struck a bell. That "ting" said, "Go, live guinea; and let another come."

"Heart-disease now!" said Mrs. Dodd, sinking back in her hired carriage, and the tears were in her patient eyes.

"My own, own mamma," said Julia, earnestly, "do not distress yourself. I have no disease in the world,

but my old, old, old one, of being a naughty, wayward girl. As for you, mamma, you have resigned your own judgment to your inferiors, and that is both our misfortunes. Dear, dear mamma, do take me to a doctress next time, if you have not had enough."

"To a what, love?"

"A she-doctor, then."

"A female physician, child? There is no such thing. No; assurance is becoming a characteristic of our sex; but we have not yet intruded ourselves into the learned professions, thank Heaven!"

"Excuse me, mamma, there are one or two; for the newspapers say so."

"Well, dear, there are none in this country, happily."

"What, not in London?"

"No."

"Then what is the use of such a great, overgrown place, all smoke, if there is nothing in it you cannot find in the country? Let us go back to Barkington this very day, this minute, this instant; oh, pray, pray!"

"And so you shall—to-morrow. But you must pity your poor mother's anxiety, and see Dr. Chalmers first."

"O mamma, not another surgeon! He frightened me; he hurt me; I never heard of such a thing; oh, please not another surgeon."

"It is not a surgeon, dear; it is the court physician."

The court physician detected "a somewhat morbid condition of the great nervous centres." To an inquiry whether there was heart-disease, he replied, "Pooh!" On being told Sir William had announced heart-disease, he said, "Ah! *that alters the case entirely.*" He maintained, however, that it must be trifling, and would go no further, the nervous system once restored to its healthy tone. "O Jupiter, aid us! Blue pill and Seidlitz powder."

Dr. Kenyon found the mucous membrane was irritated and required soothing. "O Jupiter, etc."

Mrs. Dodd returned home consoled and confused; Julia listless and apathetic. Tea was ordered, with two or three kinds of bread, thinnest slices of meat, and a little blanc-mange, etc., their favorite repast after a journey; and whilst the tea was drawing, Mrs. Dodd looked over the card-tray and enumerated the visitors that had called during their absence: "Dr. Short — Mr. Osmond — Mrs. Hetherington — Mr. Alfred Hardie — Lady Dewry — Mrs. and Miss Bosanquet. What a pity Edward was not at home, dear; Mr. Alfred Hardie's visit must have been to him."

"Oh, of course, mamma."

"A very manly young gentleman."

"Oh, yes. No. He is so rude."

"Is he? Ah, he was ill just then, and pain irritates gentlemen: they are not accustomed to it, poor things."

"That is like you, dear mamma; making excuses for one." Julia added, faintly, "But he is so impetuous."

"I have a daughter who reconciles me to impetuosity. And he *must* have a good heart, he was so kind to my boy."

Julia looked down smiling; but presently seemed to be seized with a spirit of contradiction; she began to pick poor Alfred to pieces; he was this, that, and the other; and then so bold, she might say impudent.

Mrs. Dodd replied calmly that he was very kind to her boy.

"O mamma, you cannot approve all the words he spoke."

"It is not worth while to remember all the words young gentlemen speak, nowadays; he was very kind to my boy, I remember that."

The tea was now ready, and Mrs. Dodd sat down, and

patted a chair, with a smile of invitation for Julia to come and sit beside her. But Julia said, "In one minute, dear," and left the room.

When she came back, she fluttered up to her mother and kissed her vehemently, then sat down radiant. "Ah!" said Mrs. Dodd. "why, you are looking yourself once more. How do you feel now? Better?"

"How do I feel? Let me see: the world seems one enormous flower-garden, and me, the butterfly it all belongs to." She spake, and to confirm her words the airy thing went waltzing, sailing, and fluttering round the room, and sipping mamma every now and then on the wing.

In this buoyancy she remained some twenty-four hours; and then came clouds and chills, which, in their turn, gave way to exaltation, duly followed by depression. Her spirits were so uncertain, that things too minute to justify narration turned the scale either way: a word from Mrs. Dodd — a new face at St. Anne's Church looking devoutly her way — a piece of town gossip distilled in her ear by Mrs. Maxley — and she was sprightly or languid, and both more than reason.

One drizzly afternoon they were sitting silent and sabbish in the drawing-room, Mrs. Dodd correcting the mechanical errors in a drawing of Julia's, and admiring the rare dash and figure, and Julia doggedly studying Dr. Whately's logic, with now and then a sigh, when suddenly a trumpet seemed to articulate in the little hall: "Mestress Doedd at home?"

The lady rose from her seat, and said with a smile of pleasure, "I hear a voice."

The door opened, and in darted a gray-headed man, with handsome but strongly marked features, laughing and shouting like a schoolboy broke loose. He cried out, "Aha! I've found y' out at last." Mrs. Dodd glided

to meet him, and put out both her hands, the palms downwards, with the prettiest air of ladylike cordiality; he shook them heartily. "The vagabins said y' had left the town; but y' had only flitted from the quay to the subbubs; 'twas a pashint put me on the scint of ye. And how are y' all these years? an' how's Sawmill?"

"Sawmill! What is that?"

"It's just your husband. Isn't his name Sawmill?"

"Dear, no! Have you forgotten? — David."

"Ou, ay. I knew it was some Scripcher Petrarch or another, Daavid, or Naathan, or Sawmill. And how is he, and where is he?"

Mrs. Dodd replied that he was on the seas, but expect —

"Then I wish him well off 'em, confound 'em onean-nall! Halloa! why, this will be the little girl grown up int' a wumman while ye look round."

"Yes, my good friend; and her mother's darling."

"And she's a bonny lass, I can tell ye. But no freend to the dockers, I see."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Dodd sadly, "looks are deceitful; she is under medical advice at this very" —

"Well, that won't hurt her, unless she takes it." And he burst into a ringing laugh: but, in the middle of it, stopped dead short, and his face elongated. "Lordsake, mad'm," said he, impressively, "mind what y' are at, though: Barkton's just a trap for fanciful femuls: there's a n'oily ass called Osmond, and a canting cut-throat called Stephenson, and a genteel, cadaveris old assassin called Short, as long as a May-pole, they'd soon take the rose out of Miss Floree's cheek here. Why, they'd starve Cupid, an' veneseck Venus, an' blister Pomonee, the vagabins."

Mrs. Dodd looked a little confused, and exchanged speaking glances with Julia. However, she said,

calmly, "I *have* consulted Mr. Osmond, and Dr. Short; but have not relied on them alone. I have taken her to Sir William Best. And to Dr. Chalmers. And to Dr. Kenyon." And she felt invulnerable behind her phalanx of learning and reputation.

"Good Hivens!" roared the visitor, "what a gauntlet o' gabies for one girl to run; and come out alive! And the picter of health. My faith, Miss Floree, y' are tougher than ye look."

"My daughter's name is Julia," observed Mrs. Dodd, a little haughtily; but instantly recovering herself, she said, "This is Dr. Sampson, love, an old friend of your mother's."

"And th' author an' invintor of th' great chronothairmal therey o' midicine, th' unity perriodicity an' remittency of all disease," put in the visitor, with such prodigious swiftness of elocution, that the words went tumbling over one another like railway carriages out on pleasure, and the sentence was a pile of loud, indistinct syllables.

Julia's lovely eyes dilated at this clishmaclaver, and she bowed coldly. Dr. Sampson had revealed in this short interview nearly all the characteristics of voice, speech, and manner, she had been taught from infancy to shun: boisterous, gesticulatory, idiomatic: and had taken the discourse out of her mamma's mouth twice; now Albion Villa was a Red Indian hut in one respect: here nobody interrupted.

Mrs. Dodd had little personal egotism, but she had a mother's, and could not spare this opportunity of adding another doctor to her collection; so she said, hurriedly, "Will you permit me to show you what your learned *confères* have prescribed her?" Julia sighed aloud, and deprecated the subject with earnest furtive signs; Mrs. Dodd would not see them. Now, Dr. Sampson was

himself afflicted with what I shall venture to call a mental ailment; to wit, a furious intolerance of other men's opinions; he had not even patience to hear them. "Mai — dear — mad'm," said he, hastily, "when you've told me their names, that's enough. Short treats her for liver, Sir William goes in for lung disease or heart, Chalmers sis it's the nairves, and Kinyon the mookis membrin; and *I* say they are fools and lyres all four."

"Julia!" ejaculated Mrs. Dodd, "this is very extraordinary."

"No, it is not extraordinary," cried Dr. Sampson, defiantly; "nothing is extraordinary. D'ye think I've known these shallow men thirty years, and not plumbed 'um?"

"Shallow, my good friend? Excuse me! they are the ablest men in your own branch of your own learned profession."

"Th' ablest? Oh, you mean the money-makingest; now listen me! our lairned profession is a rascally one. It is like a barrel of beer. What rises to the top?" Here he paused for a moment, then answered himself furiously, "THE SCUM!"

This blast blown, he moderated a little. "Look see!" said he, "up to three or four thousand a year, a docker is often an honest man, and sometimes knows something of medicine; not much, because it is not taught anywhere; but, if he is making over five thousand, he must be a rogue or else a fool; either he has booted an' booted, and cript an' crawled, int' wholesale collusion with th' apothecary an' th' accoucheur — the two jockeys that drive John Bull's faemily coach — and they are sucking the pashint together, like a leash o' leeches; or else he has turned spicialist; has tacked his name to some poplar disorder, real or imaginary; it needn't exist to be poplar. Now, those four you have been to are spicialists,

and that means monomaniacs — their buddies exspatiate in West-ind squares, but their souls dwell in a n'alley, ivery man jack of 'em; Aberford's in Stomich Alley, Chalmers's in Nairve Court, Short's niver stirs out o' Liver Lane, Paul's is stuck fast in Kidney Close, Kinyon's in Mookis Membrin Mews, and Hibbard's in Lung Passage. Look see! nixt time y' are out of sorts, stid o' consulting three bats an' a n'owl at a guinea the piece, send direct to me, and I'll give y' all their opinions, and all their prescriptions, *gratis*. And deevilich dear ye'll find 'em at the price, if ye swallow 'm."

Mrs. Dodd thanked him coldly for the offer, but said she would be more grateful if he would show his superiority to persons of known ability, by just curing her daughter on the spot.

"Well, I will," said he, carelessly; and all his fire died out of him. "Put out your tongue! — Now your pulse!"

Mrs. Dodd knew her man (ladies are very apt to fathom their male acquaintance — too apt, *I* think); and, to pin him to the only medical theme which interested her, seized the opportunity while he was in actual contact with Julia's wrist, and rapidly enumerated her symptoms, and also told him what Mr. Osmond had said about hyperæsthesia.

"GOOSE GREECE!" barked Sampson, loud, clear, and sharp as an irritated watch-dog; but this one bow-wow vented, he was silent as abruptly.

Mrs. Dodd smiled, and proceeded to hyperæmia, and thence to the antiphlogistic regimen.

At that unhappy adjective, Sampson jumped up, cast away his patient's hand, forgot her existence — she was but a charming individual — and galloped into his native region, generalities.

“Antiphlogistic! Mai — dear — mad'm, that one long fragmint of ass's jaw has slain a million. Adapted to the weakness of human nature, which receives with rivirince ideas however childish, that come draped in long-tailed and exotic words, that aasinine polysyllable has riconciled the modern mind to the chimeras of th' ancients, and outbutchered the guillotine, the musket, and the sword; ay, and but for me

“Had barred the door
For cinturies more,

on the great coming sceince, the sceince of healing diseases instead of defining and dividing 'em and lengthening their names and their durashin, and shortening nothing but the pashint. Th' antiphlogistic therey is this: That disease is fiery, and that any artificial exhaustion of vital force must cool the system, and reduce the morbid fire, called, in their donkey Latin, 'flamma,' and in their compound donkey Latin, 'inflammation,' and, in their goose Greece, 'phlogosis,' 'phlegmon,' etc. And accordingly th' antiphlogistic practice is, to cool the sick man by bleeding him, and, when blid, either to rebleed him with a change of instrument, bites and stabs instid of gashes, or else to rake the blid, and then blister the blid and raked, and then push mercury till the teeth of the blid, raked and blistered shake in their sockets, and to starve the blid, purged, salivated, blistered wretch from first to last. This is the antiphlogistic system. It is seldom carried out entire, because the pashint at the first or second link in their rimedial chain, expires; or else gives such plain signs of sinking, that even these ass-ass-ins take fright, and try t' undo their own work, not disease's, by tonics an' turtle, and stimulants: which things given at the right time instead of the wrong, given when the pashint was merely weakened by his

disorder, and not enfeebled by their didly rimedies, would have cut th' ailment down in a few hours."

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Dodd; "and now, my good friend, with respect to *my daughter*" —

"N' list *me!*" clashed Sampson; "ye're goen to fathom th' antiphlogistics, since they still survive an' slay in holes and corners like Barkton and d'Itly; I've driven the vamperes out o' the cintres o' civilization. Begin with their coolers! Exhaustion is not a cooler, it is a feverer, and they know it; the way parrots know sentences. Why are we all more or less feverish at night? because we are weaker. Starvation is no cooler, it is an inflamer, and they know it, as parrots know truths, but can't apply them; for they know that burning fever rages in ivery town, street, camp, where famine is. As for bloodletting, their prime cooler, it is inflammatory; and they know it (parrot-wise), for the thumping heart, and bounding pulse, of pashints blid by butchers in black, and bullocks blid by butchers in blue, prove it; and they have recorded this in all their books; yet stabbed, and bit, and starved, and mercuried, and murdered, on. But mind ye, all their sham coolers are real weakeners (I wonder they didn't inventory Satin and his brimstin lake among their refrijrators), and this is the point whence t' appreciate their imbecility, and the sairvice I have rendered mankind in been th' first t' attack their banded school, at a time it seemed imprig-nable."

"Ah, this promises to be very interesting," sighed Mrs. Dodd; "and before you enter on so large a field, perhaps it would be as well to dispose of a little matter which lies at my heart. Here is *my poor daughter*" —

"NLISSMEE! A human bean is in a constant state of flux and reflux; his component particles move, change,

disappear, and are renewed; his life is a round of exhaustion and repair. Of this repair the brain is the sovereign agent by night and day; and the blood the great living material; and digestible food th' indispensable supply. And this balance of exhaustion and repair is too nice to tamper with; disn't a single sleepless night, or dinnerless day, write some pallor on the face, and tell against the buddy? So does a single excessive perspiration, a trifling diary, or a cut finger, though it takes but half an ounce of blood out of the system. And what is the cause of that rare ivint — which occurs only to pashints that can't afford docking — Dith from old age? Think ye the man really succumms under years, or is mowed down by time? Nay, yon's just potry an' bosh. Nashins have been thinned by the lancet, but niver by the scythe; and years are not forces, but misures of events. No, Centenarius decays and dies, bekase his bodil' expinditure goes on, and his bodil' income falls off by failure of the reparative and reproductive forces. And now suppose bodil' exhaustion and repair were a mere matter of pecuniary, instead of vital, economy; what would you say to the steward or housekeeper, who, to balance your accounts and keep you solvent, should open every known channel of expinse with one hand, and with the other — stop the supplies? Yet this is how the dockers for thirty cinturies have burned th' human candle at both ends, yet wondered the light of life expired under their hands."

"It seems irrational. Then in *my daughter's* case you would" —

"Looksee! A pashint falls sick. What haps directly? Why, the balance is troubled, and exhaustion exceeds repair. For proof, obsairve the buddy when disease is fresh!

"And you will always find a loss of flesh.

To put it ekonomikly, and then you must understand it, bein' a housekeeper —

“ Whatever the disease, its form or essence,
Expinditure goes on, and income lessens.

But to this sick and therefore weak man, comes a docker purblind with cinturies of cant, pricident, blood and goose Greece; imagines him a fiery pervalid, though the common-sense of mankind, through its interpreter common language, pronounces him an ‘invalid,’ gashes him with a lancet, spills out the great liquid material of all repair by the gallon, and fells this weak man, wounded now, and pale, and fainting, with dith stamped on his face, to th' earth, like a bayoneted soldier or a slaughtered ox. If the weak man, wounded thus, and weakened, survives, then the chartered thugs who have drained him by the bung-hole, turn to and drain him by the spigot; they blister him, and then calomel him; and lest nature should have the ghost of a chance to counterbalance these frightful outgoings, they keep strong meat and drink out of his system emptied by their stabs, bites, purges, mercury, and blisters; damdijits! And that, Asia excipted, was profissional midicine from Hippocrates to Sampsin; antiphlogistic is but a modern name for an ass-ass-inating routine which has niver varied a hair since scholastic midicine, the silliest and didliest of all the hundred forms of quaekery, first rose — unlike sceince, art, religion, and all true suns — in the West; to wound the sick; to weaken the weak; and mutilate the hurt; and thin mankind.”

The voluble impugner of his own profession delivered these two last words in thunder so sudden and effective as to strike Julia's work out of her hands. But here, as in nature, a moment's pause followed the thunderclap;

so Mrs. Dodd, who had long been patiently watching her opportunity, smothered a shriek, and edged in a word: "This is irresistible; you have confuted everybody to their heart's content: and now the question is, what course shall we substitute?" She meant, "in the great case, which occupies me." But Sampson attached a nobler, wider, sense to her query. "What course? Why, the great Chronothairmal practice, based on the remittent and febrile character of all disease; above all, on

"The law of Periodicity, a law
Medicine yet has wells of light to draw."

By remittency, I mean th' ebb of disease, by periodicity, th' ebb and also the flow, the paroxysm and the remission. These remit and recur, and keep time like the tides, not in ague and remittent fever only, as the profession imagines to this day, but in all diseases from a scirrhus in the pylorus t' a toothache. And I discovered this, and the new paths to cure of all diseases it opens. Alone I did it; and what my reward? hooted, insulted, belied, and called a quack, by the banded school of professional assassins, who in their day hooted Harvey and Jinner, authors too of great discoveries, but discoveries narrow in their consequences compared with mine. T' appreciate Chronothairmalism, ye must begin at the beginning; so just answer me — What is man?"

At this huge inquiry whirring up all in a moment, like a cock-pheasant in a wood, Mrs. Dodd sank back in her chair despondent. Seeing her *hors de combat*, Sampson turned to Julia and demanded, twice as loud, "WHAT IS MAN?" Julia opened two violet eyes at him, and then looked at her mother for a hint how to proceed.

"How can that child answer such a question?" sighed Mrs. Dodd. "Let us return to the point."

“I have never strayed an inch from it. It’s about ‘Young Physic.’”

“No, excuse me, it is about a young lady. Universal medicine! what have I to do with that?”

“Now this is the way with them all,” cried Sampson, furious; “there lowed John Bull. The men and women of this benighted nashin have an ear for anything; provided it matters nothing: talk jology, conchology, entomology, theology, meteorology, astronomy, deuteronomy, botheronomy, or boshology, and one is listened to with riverence, because these are all far-off things in fogs; but at a word about the great, near, useful art of healing, y’ all stop your ears; for why? your life and daili-anhourly happiness depend on it. But ‘no,’ sis John Bull, the knowledge of our own buddies, and how to save our own bakin, beef I mean, day by day from disease and chartered ass-ass-ins, all that may interest the thinkers in Saturn, but what the deevil is it t’ us? talk t’ us of the hiv’nly buddies, not of our own; babble o’ comets an’ meteors an’ ethereal nibulæ (never mind the nibulæ in our own skulls). Discourse t’ us of predistinashin, Spitzbairgen seaweed, the last novel, the sixth vile; of Chrischinizing the Patagonians on condition they are not to come here and Chrischinize the Whitechapelians; of the letter to the *Times* from the tinker wrecked at Timbuctoo; and the dear professor’s lecture on the probabeelity of snail-shells in the back-yard of the moon: but don’t ask us to know ourselves. — Ijjits!”

The eloquent speaker, depressed by the perversity of Englishmen in giving their minds to every part of creation but their bodies, suffered a momentary loss of energy; then Mrs. Dodd, who had long been watching, lynx-like, glided in. “Let us compound. You are for curing all the world, beginning with nobody. My ambition is to cure *my girl*, and leave mankind in peace. Now, if you will

begin with *my Julia*, I will submit to rectify the universe in its proper turn. Any time will do to set the human race right; you own it is in no hurry; but *my child's* case presses; so do pray cure her for me. Or at least tell me what her indisposition is."

"Oh! What, didn't I tell you? Well, there's nothing the matter with her."

At receiving this cavalier reply for the reward of all her patience, Mrs. Dodd was so hurt, and so nearly angry, that she rose with dignity from her seat, her cheek actually pink, and the water in her eyes. Sampson saw she was ruffled, and appealed to Julia, of all people. "There now, Miss Julee," said he, ruefully, "she is in a rage because I won't humbug her. *Poplus voolt decipee*. I tell you, ma'am, it is not a midical case; give me disease and I'll cure 't. Stop, I'll tell ye what do; let her take and swallow the Barkton docks' prescriptions, and Butcher Best's and canting Kinyon's, and after those four tinkers there'll be plenty holes to mend; then send for me!"

Here was irony. Mrs. Dodd retorted by finesse; she turned on him with a treacherous smile and said, "Never mind doctors and patients; it is so long since we met; I do hope you will waive ceremony, and dine with me *en ami*."

He accepted with pleasure; but must return to his inn first and get rid of his dirty boots, and pashints. And with this he whipped out his watch, and saw that, dealing with universal medicine, he had disappointed more than one sick individual; so shot out as hard as he had shot in, and left the ladies looking at one another after the phenomenon.

"Well!" said Julia, with a world of meaning.

"Yes, dear," replied Mrs. Dodd, "he *is* a little eccentric. I think I will request them to make some addition to the dinner."

"No, mamma, if you please, not to put me off so transparently. If I had interrupted, and shouted, and behaved so, you would have packed *me* off to bed, or somewhere, directly."

"Don't say 'packed,' love. Dismissed me to bed."

"Ah!" cried Julia, "that privileged person is gone, and we must all mind our p's and q's once more."

Mrs. Dodd, with an air of nonchalance, replied to the effect that Dr. Sampson was not her offspring; and so she was not bound to correct his eccentricities. "And I suppose," said she, languidly, "we must accept these extraordinary people as we find them. But that is no reason why *you* should say p's and q's, darling."

That day her hospitable board was spread over a trap. Blessed with an oracle irrelevantly fluent, and dumb to the point, she had asked him to dinner with maternal address. He could not be on his guard eternally; sooner or later, through inadvertence, or in a moment of convivial recklessness, or in a parenthesis of some grand generality, he would cure her child: or, perhaps, at his rate of talking, would wear out his idle themes, down to the very "well-being of mankind;" and then Julia's mysterious indisposition would come on the blank tapis. With these secret hopes she presided at the feast, all grace and gentle amity. Julia, too, sat down with a little design, but a very different one; viz., of being chilly company, for she disliked this new acquaintance, and hated the science of medicine.

The unconscious object chatted away with both, and cut their replies very short, and did strange things: sent away Julia's chicken, regardless of her scorn, and prescribed mutton; called for champagne and made her drink it, and pout; and thus excited Mrs. Dodd's hopes that he was attending to the case by degrees.

But, after dinner, Julia, to escape medicine universal,

and particular, turned to her mother, and dilated on the treachery of her literary guide, the "Criticaster." "It said 'Odds and Ends' was a good novel to read by the seaside. So I thought, 'Then oh, how different it must be from most books, if you can sit by the glorious sea and even look at it.' So I sent for it directly, and, would you believe, it was an ignoble thing; all flirtations and curates. The sea, indeed! A pond would be fitter to read it by; and one with a good many geese on."

"Was ever such simplicity?" said Mrs. Dodd. "Why, my dear, that phrase about the sea does not *mean* anything. I shall have you believing that Mr. So-and-So, a novelist, can '*wither fashionable folly,*' and that '*a painful incident*' to one shopkeeper has '*thrown a gloom*' over a whole market-town, and so on. Nowadays every third phrase is of this character; a starling's note. Once, it appears, there was an age of gold, and then came one of iron, and then of brass. All these are gone, and the age of 'jargon' has succeeded."

She sighed, and Sampson generalized; he plunged from the seaside novel into the sea of fiction. He rechristened that joyous art feckshin, and lashed its living professors. "You devour their three volumes greedily," said he, "but after your meal you feel as empty as a drum; there is no leading idea in 'um; now, there always is—in Molière: and *he* comprehended the midicine of his age. But what fundamental truth d'our novelists iver convey? All they can do is pile incidents. Their customers dictate th' article; unideaed melodrams for unideaed girls. The writers and their feckshins belong to one species, and that's 'the non-vertebrated animals;' and their midicine is bosh; why, they bleed still for falls and fevers, and niver mention vital chronometry. Then they don't look straight at nature, but see with their ears, and repeat one another twelve deep.

Now, listen me! there are the cracters for an 'ideaed feckshin' in Barkington, and I'd write it, too, only I haven't time."

At this, Julia, forgetting her resolution, broke out, "Romantic characters in Barkington? who? who?"

"Who *should* they be but my pashints? Ay, ye may lauch, Miss Julee, but wait till ye see them." He was then seized with a fit of candor, and admitted that some, even of his patients, were colorless; indeed, not to mince the matter, six or seven of that sacred band were nullity in person. "I can compare the beggars to nothing," said he, "but the globules of the do-nothings; dee—d insipid, and nothing in 'em. But the others make up. Man alive, I've got a 'a rosy-cheeked miser,' and an 'ill-used attorney,' and an 'honest screw,' he is a gardener, with a head like a cart-horse."

"Mamma! mamma! that is Mr. Maxley," cried Julia, clapping her hands, and thawing in her own despite.

"Then there's my virgin martyr, and my puppy; they are brother and sister; and there's their father, but he is an impenetrable dog — won't unbosom. Howiver, he sairves to draw chicks for the other two, and so keep 'em goen. By-the-by, you know my puppy."

"We have not that honor. We do not know Mr. Sampson's puppy, love?" inquired Mrs. Dodd, rather languidly.

"Mamma! — I — I — know no one of that name."

"Don't tell me! Why, it was he sent me here: told me where you lived, and I was to make haste, for Miss Dodd was very ill: it is young Hardie, the banker's son, ye know."

Mrs. Dodd said, good-humoredly, but with a very slight touch of irony, that really they were very much flattered by the interest Mr. Alfred Hardie had shown; especially as her daughter had never exchanged ten words with

him. Julia colored at this statement, the accuracy of which she had good reason to doubt; and the poor girl felt as if an icicle passed swiftly along her back. And then for the first time in her life she thought her mother hardly gracious; and she wanted to say *she* was obliged to Mr. Alfred Hardie, but dared not, and despised herself for not daring. Her composure was further attacked by Mrs. Dodd looking full at her, and saying interrogatively, "I wonder how that young gentleman could know about your being ill."

At this Julia eyed her plate very attentively, and murmured, "I believe it is all over the town; and seriously too, so Mrs. Maxley says: for she tells me that in Barkington, if more than one doctor is sent for, that bodes ill for the patient."

"Deevelich ill!" cried Sampson, heartily.

"For two physicians, like a pair of oars,
Conduck him faster to the Styjjin shores."¹

Julia looked him in the face and coldly ignored this perversion of Mrs. Maxley's meaning; and Mrs. Dodd returned pertinaciously to the previous topic. "Mr. Alfred Hardie interests me; he was good to Edward. I am curious to know why you call him a puppy?"

"Only because he is one, ma'am. And that is no reason at all with 'the Six.' He is a juveneel pidant, and a puppy, and contradicts ivery new truth, bekase it isn't in Aristotle and th' Eton Grammar; and he's such a chatterbox, ye can't get in a word idgeways; and he and his sister—that's my virgin martyr—are a farce. *He* keeps sneerin' at her relijgin, and that puts *her* in such a rage, she threatens 't' intercede for him at the throne."

¹ Garth.

“Jargon,” sighed Mrs. Dodd, and just shrugged her lovely shoulders. “We breathe it—we float in an atmosphere of it. My love?” And she floated out of the room, and Julia floated after.

Sampson sat meditating on the gullibility of man in matters medical. This favorite speculation detained him late, and almost his first word on entering the drawing-room was, “Good-night, little girl.”

Julia colored at this broad hint, drew herself up, and lighted a bed-candle. She went to Mrs. Dodd, kissed her, and whispered in her ear, “I hate him!” and, as she retired, her whole elegant person launched ladylike defiance; under which brave exterior no little uneasiness was hidden. “Oh, what will become of me,” thought she, “if *he* has gone and told him about Henley?”

“Let’s see the prescriptions, ma’am,” said Dr. Sampson.

Delighted at this concession, Mrs. Dodd took them out of her desk and spread them earnestly. He ran his eye over them, and pointed out that the mucous-membrane man and the nerve man had prescribed the same medicine on irreconcilable grounds; and a medicine, moreover, whose effect on the nerves was *nil*, and on the mucous membrane was not to soothe it, but plough it and harrow it; “and did not that open her eyes?” He then reminded her that all these doctors in consultation would have contrived to agree. “But you,” said he, “have baffled the collusive hoax by which Dox arrived at a sham uniformity—honest uniformity can never exist till scientific principles obtain. Listme! To begin: is the pashint in love?”

The doctor put this query in just the same tone in which they inquire, “Any expectoration?” But Mrs. Dodd, in reply, was less dry and business-like. She started and looked aghast. This possibility had once, for a moment, occurred to her, but only to be rejected, the evidence being all against it.

“In love?” said she. “That child, and I not know it!”

He said he had never supposed that. “But I thought I’d just ask ye; for she has no bodily ailment, and the paassions are all counterfeit diseases; they are connected, like all diseases, with cerebral instability, have their heats and chills like all diseases, and their paroxysms and remissions like all diseases. Nlistme! You have detected the signs of a slight cerebral instability; I have ascertained th’ absence of all physical cause: then why make this healthy pashint’s buddy a test-tube for poisons? Sovereign drugs (I deal with no other, I leave the nullities to the noodles) are either counter-poisons or poisons, and here there is nothing to counter-poison at prisent. So I’m for caushin, and working on the safe side th’ hidge, till we are less in the dark. Mind ye, young women at her age are kittle cattle; they have gusts o’ this, and gusts o’ that, th’ unreasonable imps! D’ye see these two pieces pasteboard? They are tickets for a ball,

In Barkton town-hall.”

“Yes, of course I see them,” said Mrs. Dodd, dolefully.

“Well, I prescribe ’em. And when they have been taken,

And the pashint well shaken,

perhaps we shall see whether we are on the right system: and if so, we’ll dose her with youthful society in a more irrashinal form; conversaziones, cookeyshines, et citera. And if we find ourselves on the wrong *tack*, why then, we’ll hark *back*.

Stick blindly to, ‘a course,’ the dockers cry.

But it does me harm: *Then* ’twill do good *by-an-by*,

Where lairned ye that, Echoes of Echoes, say!

The killer ploughs ‘a course,’ the healer ‘*feels his way.*’”

So mysterious are the operations of the human mind, that, when we have exploded in verse tuneful as the above, we lapse into triumph instead of penitence. Not that doggerel meets with reverence here below — the statues to it are few, and not in marble, but in the material itself — but then an impromptu! A moment ago our posy was not: and now is; with the speed, if not the brilliancy, of lightning, we have added a handful to the intellectual dust-heap of an oppressed nation. From this bad eminence Sampson then looked down complacently, and saw Mrs. Dodd's face as long as his arm. She was one that held current opinions; and the world does not believe poetry can sing the practical; verse and useful knowledge pass for incompatibles; and, though doggerel is not poetry, yet it has a lumbering proclivity that way, and so forfeits the confidence of grave, sensible people. This versification, and this impalpable and unprecedented prescription she had waited for so long, seemed all of a piece to poor mamma: wild, unpractical, and — “oh, horror! horror!” — eccentric.

Sampson read her sorrowful face after his fashion. “Oh, I see, ma'am,” cried he. “Cure is not welcome unless it comes in the form consecrated by centuries of slaughter. Well then, give me a sheet.” He took the paper and rent it asunder, and wrote this on the larger fragment: —

‡ Die Mercur. circa x. hor: vespert:
 eat in musca ad Aulam oppid:
 Saltet cum xiii canicul:
 præsertim meo. Dom: reddita,
 6 hora matutin: dormiat at prand:
 Repetat stultit: pro re nata.

He handed this with a sort of spiteful twinkle to Mrs. Dodd, and her countenance lightened again. Her sex

will generally compound with whoever can give as well as take. Now she had extracted a real, grave prescription, she acquiesced in the ball, though not a county one; "To satisfy your whim, my good, kind friend, to whom I owe so much."

Sampson called on his way back to town, and, in course of conversation, praised Nature for her beautiful instincts, one of which, he said, had inspired Miss Julee, at a credulous age, not to swallow "the didly drastics of the tinkerin dox."

Mrs. Dodd smiled, and requested permission to contradict him; her daughter had taken the several prescriptions.

Sampson inquired brusquely if she took him for a fool.

She replied, calmly, "No; for a very clever, but *rather* opinionated personage."

"Opinated? So is ivery man who has grounds for his opinin. D'ye think, because Dockers Short an' Bist an' Kinyon an' Cuckoo and Jackdaw an' Starling an' Co. don't know the dire effecks of calomel an' drastics on the buddy, I don't know't? Her eye, her tongue, her skin, her voice, her elastic walk, all tell *me* she has not been robbed of her vital resources. Why, if she had taken that genteel old thief Short's rimidies alone, the girl's gums would be sore,

And herself at dith's door."

Mrs. Dodd was amused. "Julia, this is so like the gentlemen; they are in love with argument. They go on till they reason themselves out of their reason. Why beat about the bush, when there she sits?"

"What, go t' a wumman for the truth, when I can go t' infallible inference?"

"You may always go to my David's daughter for the

truth," said Mrs. Dodd, with dignity. She then looked the inquiry: and Julia replied to her look as follows: first, she colored very high; then she hid her face in both her hands; then rose, and, turning her neck swiftly, darted a glance of fiery indignation and bitter reproach on Dr. Meddlesome, and left the apartment mighty stag-like.

"Mairey on us!" cried Sampson. "Did ye see that, ma'am? Yon's just a bonny basilisk. Another such thunderbolt as she dispensed, and ye'll be ringing for your maid to sweep up the good physician's ashes."

Julia did not return till the good physician was gone back to London. Then she came in with a rush, and, demonstrative toad, embraced Mrs. Dodd's knees, and owned she had cultivated her geraniums with all those medicines, liquid and solid; and only one geranium had died.

There is a fascinating age when an intelligent girl is said to fluctuate between childhood and womanhood. Let me add that these seeming fluctuations depend much on the company she is in: the budding virgin is princess of chameleons; and, to confine ourselves to her two most piquant contrasts, by her mother's side she is always more or less childlike; but, let a nice young fellow engage her apart, and, hey presto! she shall be every inch a woman: perhaps at no period of her life are the purely mental characteristics of her sex so supreme in her: thus her type, the rosebud, excels in essence of rosehood the rose itself.

My reader has seen Julia Dodd play both parts; but it is her child's face she has now been turning for several pages; so it may be prudent to remind him she has shone on Alfred Hardie in but one light; a young, but Juno-like, woman. Had she shown "my puppy" her

childish qualities, he would have despised her; he had left that department himself so recently. But nature guarded the budding fair from such a disaster.

We left Alfred Hardie standing in the moonlight gazing at her lodging. This was sudden; but, let slow coaches deny it as loudly as they like, fast coaches exist; and love is a passion which, like hate, envy, avarice, etc., has risen to a great height in a single day. Not that Alfred's was "love at first sight;" for he had seen her beauty in the full blaze of day with no deeper feeling than admiration; but in the moonlight he came under more sovereign spells than a fair face: her virtues and her voice. The narrative of their meeting has indicated the first, and, as to the latter, Julia was not one of those whose beauty goes out with the candle; her voice was that rich, mellow, moving organ, which belongs to no rank nor station; is born, not made; and, flow it from the lips of dairymaid or countess, touches every heart, gentle or simple, that is truly male. And this divine contralto, full, yet penetrating, Dame Nature had inspired her to lower when she was moved or excited, instead of raising it: and then she was enchanting. All unconsciously she cast this crowning spell on Alfred, and he adored her. In a word, he caught a child-woman away from its mother; his fluttering captive turned, put on composure, and bewitched him.

She left him, and the moonlight night seemed to blacken. But within his young breast all was light, new light. He leaned opposite her window in an Elysian reverie, and let the hours go by. He seemed to have vegetated till then, and lo! true life had dawned. He thought he should love to die for her; and, when he was calmer, he felt he was to live for her, and welcomed his destiny with rapture. He passed the rest of the Oxford term in a soft ecstasy; called often on Edward,

and took a sudden and prodigious interest in him; and counted the days glide by and the happy time draw near, when he should be four months in the same town with his enchantress. This one did not trouble the doctors; he glowed with a steady fire; no heats and chills, and sad misgivings; for one thing, he was not a woman, a being tied to that stake, suspense, and compelled to wait and wait for others' actions. To him, life's path seemed paved with roses, and himself to march it in eternal sunshine, buoyed by perfumed wings.

He came to Barkington to try for the lovely prize. Then first he had to come down from love's sky, and realize how hard it is here below to court a young lady—who is guarded by a mother—without an introduction in the usual form. The obvious course was to call on Edward. Having parted from him so lately, he forced himself to wait a few days, and then set out for Albion Villa.

As he went along, he arranged the coming dialogue for all the parties: Edward was to introduce him; Mrs. Dodd to recognize his friendship for her son; he was to say he was the gainer by it; Julia, silent at first, was to hazard a timid observation, and he to answer gracefully, and draw her out, and find how he stood in her opinion: the sprightly affair should end by his inviting Edward to dinner. That should lead to their inviting him in turn, and then he should have a word with Julia, and find out what houses she visited, and get introduced to their proprietors; arrived at this point, his mind went over hedge and ditch faster than my poor pen can follow; as the crow flies, so flew he, and had reached the church-porch under a rain of nosegays with Julia—in imagination—by then he arrived at Albion Villa in the body. Yet he knocked timidly; his heart beat almost as hard as his hand.

Sarah, the black-eyed housemaid, "answered the door."

"Mr. Edward Dodd?"

"Not at home, sir. Left last week."

"For long?"

"I don't rightly know, sir. But he won't be back this week, I don't think."

"Perhaps," stammered Alfred, "the ladies — Mrs. Dodd — might be able to tell me."

"Oh, yes, sir. But my mistress she's in London just now."

Alfred's eyes flashed. "Could I learn from Miss Dodd?"

"La, sir, she is in London along with her ma; why, 'tis for her they are gone, to insult the great doctors."

He started. "She is not ill? Nothing serious?"

"Well, sir, we do hope not; she is pining a bit, as young ladies will."

Alfred was anything but consoled by this off-hand account! he became alarmed, and looked wretched. Seeing him so perturbed, Sarah, who was blunt but good-natured, added, "But cook she says hard work would cure our miss of all *she* ails. But who shall I say was asking? for my work is a bit behindhand."

Alfred took the hint reluctantly, and drew out his card-case, saying, "For Mr. Edward Dodd." She gave her clean but wettish hand a hasty wipe with her apron, and took the card; he retired, she stood on the step and watched him out of sight, said "Oho!" and took his card to the kitchen for preliminary inspection and discussion.

Alfred Hardie was resolute, but sensitive. He had come on the wings of love and hope; he went away heavily: a housemaid's tongue had shod his elastic feet with lead in a moment; of all misfortunes sickness was what he had not anticipated, for she looked immortal.

Perhaps it was that fair and treacherous disease, consumption. Well, if it was, he would love her all the more, would wed her as soon as he was of age, and carry her to some soft Southern clime, and keep each noxious air at bay, and prolong her life, perhaps save it.

And now he began to chafe at the social cobwebs that kept him from her. But just as his impatience was about to launch him into imprudence, he was saved by a genuine descendant of Adam. James Maxley kept Mr. Hardie's little pleasaunce trim as trim could be, by yearly contract. This entailed short but frequent visits; and Alfred often talked with him, for the man was really a bit of a character, had a shrewd rustic wit, and a ready tongue, was rather too fond of law, and much too fond of money, but scrupulously honest, head as long as Cudworth's, but broader, and could not read a line. One day he told Alfred that he must knock off now, and take a look in at Albion Vilee. The captain was due, and on no account would he, Maxley, allow that there ragged box round the captain's quarterdeck: "That is how he do name their little mossel of a lawn; and there he walks for a wager, athirt and across, across and athirt, five steps and then about: and I'd a'most bet ye a half-penny he thinks hisself on the salt sea ocean, bless his silly old heart!"

All this time Alfred, after the first start of joyful surprise, was secretly thanking his stars for sending him an instrument. To learn whether she had returned, he asked Maxley whether the ladies had sent for him.

"Not they," said Maxley, rather contemptuously; "what do women-folk care about a border, without 'tis a lace one to their nightcaps, for none but the father of all vanity to see. Not as I have aught to say again the pair; they keep their turf tidyish,—and pay ready money—and a few flowers in their pots; but the rest

may shift for itself. Ye see, Master Alfred," explained Maxley, wagging his head wisely, "nobody's pride can be everywhere. Now theirs is in-a-doors; their withdrawing-room it's like the queen's palace, my missus tells me; she is wrapped up in 'em, ye know. But the captain for my money."

The sage shouldered his tools and departed. But he left a good hint behind him. Alfred hovered about the back door the next day till he caught Mrs. Maxley; she supplied the house with eggs and vegetables. "Could she tell him whether his friend Edward Dodd was likely to come home soon?" She thought not; he was gone away to study. "He haven't much head-piece, you know, not like what Miss Julia have. Mrs. and miss are to be home to-day; they wrote to cook this morning. I shall be there to-morrow, sartain, and I'll ask in the kitchen when Master Edward is a-coming back." She prattled on. The ladies of Albion Villa were good kind ladies; the very maid-servants loved them. Miss was more for religion than her mother, and went to St. Anne's Church Thursday evenings, and Sundays morning and evening; and visited some poor women in the parish with food and clothes. Mrs. Dodd could not sleep a wink when the wind blew hard at night, but never complained, only came down pale to breakfast. Miss Julia's ailment was nothing to speak of, but they were in care along of being so wrapped up in her, and no wonder, for if ever there was a duck!—

Acting on this intelligence, Alfred went early the next Sunday to St. Anne's Church, and sat down in the side gallery at its east end. While the congregation flowed quietly in, the organist played the Agnus Dei of Mozart. Those pious, tender tones stole over this hot young heart, and whispered, "Peace, be still!" He sighed wearily, and it passed through his mind that it might have

been better for him, and especially for his studies, if he had never seen her. Suddenly the aisle seemed to lighten up; she was gliding along it, beautiful as May, and modesty itself in dress and carriage. She went into a pew and kneeled a minute, then seated herself and looked out the lessons for the day. Alfred gazed at her face; devoured it. But her eyes never roved. She seemed to have put off feminine curiosity and the world, at the church-door. Indeed, he wished she was not quite so heavenly discreet; her lashes were delicious, but he longed to see her eyes once more, to catch a glance from them, and by it decipher his fate.

But no; she was there to worship, and did not discern her earthly lover, whose longing looks were glued to her, and his body rose and sank with the true worshippers, but with no more spirituality than a piston, or a Jack-in-the-box.

In the last hymn before the sermon, a well-meaning worshipper in the gallery delivered a leading note, a high one, with great zeal, but small precision, being about a semitone flat. At this outrage on her too sensitive ear, Julia Dodd turned her head swiftly to discover the offender, and failed; but her two sapphire eyes met Alfred's point-blank.

She was crimson in a moment, and lowered them on her book again, as if to look that way was to sin. It was but a flash, but sometimes a flash fires a mine.

The lovely blush deepened and spread before it melted away, and Alfred's late cooling heart warmed itself at that sweet glowing cheek. She never looked his way again, not once, which was a sad disappointment; but she blushed again and again before the service ended, only not so deeply: now there was nothing in the sermon to make her blush. I might add, there was nothing to redden her cheek with religious excitement. There

was a little candid sourness — oil and vinegar — against sects and Low Churchmen, but thin generality predominated. Total: “Acetate of morphia,” for dry souls to sip.

So Alfred took all the credit of causing those sweet irrelevant blushes, and gloated; the young wretch could not help glorying in his power to tint that fair statue of devotion with earthly thoughts.

But stay! that dear blush, was it pleasure or pain? What if the sight of him was intolerable?

He would know how he stood with her, and on the spot. He was one of the first to leave the church; he made for the churchyard gate, and walked slowly backwards and forwards by it with throbbing heart till she came out.

She was prepared for him now, and bowed slightly to him with the most perfect composure, and no legible sentiment, except a certain marked politeness many of our young ladies think wasted upon young gentlemen, and are mistaken.

Alfred took off his hat in a tremor, and his eyes implored and inquired, but met with no further response; and she walked swiftly home, though without apparent effort. He looked longingly after her, but discretion forbade.

He now crawled by Albion Villa twice every day, wet or dry, and had the good-fortune to see her twice at the drawing-room window. He was constant at St. Anne's Church, and one Thursday crept into the aisle to be nearer to her, and he saw her steal one swift look at the gallery, and look grave; but soon she detected him, and though she looked no more towards him, she seemed demurely complacent. Alfred had learned to note these subtleties now, for love is a microscope. What he did not know was, that his timid ardor was pursuing a mas-

terly course; that to find herself furtively followed everywhere, and hovered about for a look, is apt to soothe womanly pride, and stir womanly pity, and to keep the female heart in a flutter of curiosity and emotion, two porters that open the heart's great gate to love.

Now the evening before his visit to the Dodds, Dr. Sampson dined with the Hardies, and happened to mention the Dodds among his old patients. "The Dodds of Albion Villa?" inquired Miss Hardie, to her brother's no little surprise. "Albyn fiddlestick!" said the polished doctor. "No; they live by the water-side: used to; but now they have left the town, I hear. He is a sea-captain and a fine lad, and Mrs. Dodd is just the best-bred woman I ever prescribed for, except Mrs. Sampson."

"It is the Dodds of Albion Villa," said Miss Hardie. "They have two children, — a son, his name is Edward; and a daughter, Julia; she is rather good-looking, — a gentleman's beauty."

Alfred stared at his sister. Was she blind, with her "rather good-looking"?

Sampson was quite pleased at the information. "N' listen me! I saved that girl's life when she was a year old."

"Then she is ill now, doctor," said Alfred hastily. "Do go and see her. Hum! the fact is, her brother is a great favorite of mine." He then told him how to find Albion Villa. "Jenny dear," said he, when Sampson was gone, "you never told me you knew her."

"Knew who, dear?"

"Whom? Why, Dodd's sister."

"Oh, she is a new acquaintance, and not one to interest you. We only meet in the Lord; I do not visit Albion Villa. Her mother is an amiable worldling."

"Unpardonable combination!" said Alfred with a

slight sneer. "So you and Miss Dodd meet only at church?"

"At church? hardly. She goes to St. Anne's; sits under a preacher who starves his flock with moral discourses, and holds out the sacraments of the Church as the means of grace."

Alfred shook his head good-humoredly. "Now, Jenny, that is a challenge; and you know we both got into a fury the last time we were betrayed into that miserable waste of time and temper, — theological discussion. No, no:—

Let sects delight to bark and bite,
For 'tis their nature to;
Let gown and surplice growl and fight,
For Satan makes them so.

But let you and I cut High Church and Low Church, and be brother and sister. Do tell me in English where you meet Julia Dodd, that's a dear; for young ladies 'meeting in the Lord' conveys no positive idea to my mind."

Jane Hardie sighed at this confession. "We meet in the cottages of the poor and the sick, whom He loved and pitied when on earth; and we, His unworthy servants, try to soothe their distress, and lead them to Him who can heal the soul as well as the body, and wipe away all the tears of all His people."

"Then it does you infinite credit, Jane," said Alfred warmly. "Now, that is the voice of true religion, and not the whine of this sect, nor the snarl of that. And so she joins you in this good work? I am not surprised."

"We meet in it now and then, dear; but she can hardly be said to have joined me. I have a district, you know; but poor Mrs. Dodd will not allow Julia to enlist

in the service. She visits independently, and by fits and starts; and I am afraid she thinks more of comforting their perishable bodies than of feeding their souls. It was but the other day she confessed to me her backwardness to speak in the way of instruction to women as old as her mother. She finds it so much easier to let them run on about their earthly troubles; and of course it is much *easier*. Ah, the world holds her still in some of its subtle meshes."

The speaker uttered this sadly; but presently, brightening up, said, with considerable *bonhomie*, and almost a sprightly air, "But she is a dear girl, and the Lord will yet light her candle."

Alfred pulled a face as of one that drinketh verjuice unawares: but let it pass: hypercriticism was not his cue just then. "Well, Jenny," said he, "I have a favor to ask you. Introduce me to your friend Miss Dodd. Will you?"

Miss Hardie colored faintly. "I would rather not, dear Alfred: the introduction could not be for her eternal good. Julia's soul is in a very ticklish state; she wavers as yet between this world and the other world; and it won't do; it won't do; there is no middle path. You would very likely turn the scale, and then I should have fought against her everlasting welfare — my friend's."

"What, am I an infidel?" inquired Alfred, angrily. Jane looked distressed. "Oh, no, Alfred; but you are a worldling."

Alfred, smothering a strong sense of irritation, besought her to hear reason; these big words were out of place here. "It is Dodd's sister; and he will introduce me at a word, worldling as I am."

"Then why urge me to do it, against my conscience?" asked the young lady, as sharply as if she had been a

woman of the world. "You cannot be in *love with her*, as you do not know her."

Alfred did not reply to this unlucky thrust, but made a last effort to soften her. "Can you call yourself my sister, and refuse me this trifling service, which her brother, who loves her and esteems her ten times more sincerely than you do, would not think of refusing me if he was at home?"

"Why should he? He is in the flesh himself; let the carnal introduce one another. I really must decline; but I am very, very sorry that you feel hurt about it."

"And I am very sorry I have not 'an amiable worldling' for my sister, instead of an unamiable and devilish conceited Christian." And, with these bitter words, Alfred snatched a candle and bounced to bed in a fury. So apt is one passion to rouse up others.

Jane Hardie let fall a gentle tear: but consoled herself with the conviction that she had done her duty, and that Alfred's anger was quite unreasonable, and so he would see as soon as he should cool.

The next day the lover, smarting under this check, and spurred to fresh efforts, invaded Sampson. That worthy was just going to dine at Albion Villa, so Alfred postponed pumping him till next day. Well, he called at the inn next day, and if the doctor was not just gone back to London!

Alfred wandered disconsolate homewards.

In the middle of Buchanan Street, an agitated treble called after him, "Mr. Halfred! hoh, Mr. Halfred!" He looked back and saw Dick Absalom, a promising young cricketer, brandishing a document and imploring aid. "O Master Halfred, doooo please come here. I durstn't leave the shop."

There is a tie between cricketers far too strong for social distinctions to divide, and, though Alfred muttered

peevishly, "Whose cat is dead now?" he obeyed the strange summons.

The distress was a singular one. Master Absalom, I must premise, was the youngest of two lads in the employ of Mr. Jenner, a benevolent old chemist, a disciple of Malthus. Jenner taught the virtues of drugs and minerals to tender youths, at the expense of the public. Scarcely ten minutes had elapsed since a pretty servant girl came into the shop, and laid a paper on the counter, saying, "Please to make that up, young man." Now at fifteen we are gratified by inaccuracies of this kind from ripe female lips: so master Absalom took the prescription with a complacent grin; his eye glanced over it; it fell to shaking in his hand, chill dismay penetrated his heart; and, to speak with Oriental strictness, his liver turned instantly to water. However, he made a feeble clutch at mercantile mendacity, and stammered out, "Here's a many hingredients, and the governor's out walking, and he's been and locked the drawer where he keeps our haulhopy. You couldn't come again in half an hour, miss, could ye?" She acquiesced readily, for she was not habitually called miss, and she had a follower, a languid one, living hard by, and belonged to a class which thinks it consistent to come after its followers.

Dicky saw her safe off, and groaned at his ease. Here was a prescription full of new chemicals, sovereign, no doubt; i.e., deadly when applied Jennerically; and the very directions for use were in Latin words he had encountered in no prescription before. A year ago, Dicky would have counted the prescribed ingredients on his fingers, and then taken down an equal number of little articles, solid or liquid, mixed them, delivered them, and so to cricket, serene: but now, his mind, to apply the universal cant, was "in a transition state." A year's practice had chilled the youthful valor which used to

scatter epsom salts, or oxalic acid; magnesia, or corrosive sublimate. An experiment or two by himself and his compeers, with comments by the coroner, had enlightened him as to the final result on the human body of potent chemicals fearlessly administered, leaving him dark as to their distinctive qualities applied remedially. What should he do? run with the prescription to old Taylor in the next street, a chemist of forty years? Alas! at his tender age he had not omitted to chaff that reverend rival persistently and publicly. Humble his establishment before the King Street one? Sooner perish drugs, and come eternal cricket! And, after all, why not? Drummer-boys, and powder-monkeys, and other imps of his age that dealt destruction, did not depopulate gratis; mankind acknowledged their services in cash: but old Jenner, taught by philosophy through its organ the newspapers that "knowledge is riches," was above diluting with a few shillings a week the wealth a boy acquired behind his counter: so his apprentices got no salary. Then why not shut up the old rogue's shutters, and excite a little sympathy for him, to be followed by a powerful reaction on his return from walking; and go and offer his own services on the cricket-ground to field for the gentlemen by the hour, or bowl at a shilling on their bails?

"Bowling is the lay for me," said he; "you get money for that, and you only bruise the gents a bit and break their thumbs: you can't put their vital sparks out as you can at this work."

By a striking coincidence the most influential member of the cricket club passed while Dick was in this quandary.

"O Mr. Halfred, you was always very good to me on the ground; you couldn't have me hired by the club, could ye? for I am sick of this trade; I wants to bowl."

"You little duffer!" said Alfred, "cricket is a recreation, not a business. Besides, it only lasts five months, unless you adjourn to the antipodes. Stick to the shop like a man, and make your fortune."

"O Mr. Halfred," said Dick, sorrowfully, "how can I find fortune here? Jenner don't pay. And the crowner declares he will not have it; and the *Barton Chronicle* says us young gents ought all to be given a holiday to go and see one of us hanged by lot; but this is what have broke this camel's back at last: here's a dalled thing to come smiling and smirking in with, and put it across a counter in a poor boy's hand. Oh! oh! oh!"

"Dick," said Alfred, "if you blubber, I'll give you a hiding. You have stumbled on a passage you can't construe. Well, who has not? but we don't shed the briny about it. Here, let me have a go at it."

"Ah, I've heard you are a scholard," said Dick, "but you won't make out this; there's some new preparation of mercury, and there's musk, and there's horehound, and there's a neutral salt; and dal his old head that wrote it!"

"Hold your jaw, and listen, while I construe it to you. '*Die Mercurii*, on Wednesday — *decimâ horâ vespertinâ*, at ten o'clock at night — *eat in musca*;' what does that mean? '*Eat in musca*?' I see; this is modern language with a vengeance. 'Let him go in a fly to the town-hall. *Saltet*, let him jump — *cum tredecim caniculis*, with thirteen little dogs — *præsertim meo*, especially with my little dog.' Dicky, this prescription emanates from Bedlam direct. '*Domum reddita*' — hallo! it is a woman, then. 'Let *her* go in a fly to the town-hall,' eh? 'Let *her* jump,' no, 'dance, with thirteen whelps, especially mine.' Ha! ha! ha! And who is the woman that is to do all this, I wonder?"

“Woman, indeed!” said a treble at the door; “no more than I am; it’s for a young lady. O jiminy!”

This polite ejaculation was drawn out by the speaker’s sudden recognition of Alfred, who had raised his head at her remonstrance, and now started in his turn: for it was the black-eyed servant of Albion Villa. They looked at one another in expressive silence.

“Yes, sir, it is for my young lady. Is it ready, young man?”

“No, it ain’t: and never will,” squealed Dick, angrily; “it’s a vile hoax; and you ought to be ashamed of your self bringing it into a respectable shop.”

Alfred silenced him, and told Sarah he thought Miss Dodd ought to know the nature of this prescription before it went round the chemists.

He borrowed paper of Dick, and wrote:—

“Mr. Alfred Hardie presents his compliments to Miss Dodd, and begs leave to inform her that he has, by the merest accident, intercepted the enclosed prescription. As it seems rather a sorry jest, and tends to attract attention to Miss Dodd and her movements, he has ventured, with some misgivings, to send it back with a literal translation, on reading which it will be for Miss Dodd to decide whether it is to circulate.

““On Wednesday, at ten P.M., let her go in a fly to the town-hall and dance with { little dogs, } especially with mine: re-
thirteen { puppies, } turn home
{ whelps, }

at six A.M., and sleep till dinner, and repeat the folly as occasion serves.”

“Suppose I could get it into miss’s hands when she’s alone?” whispered Sarah.

“You would earn my warmest gratitude.”

““Warmest gratitude!” Is that a warm gownd or a warm cloak, I wonder?”

"It is both, when the man is a gentleman, and a pretty, dark-eyed girl pities him and stands his friend."

Sarah smiled, and whispered, "Give it me; I'll do my best."

Alfred enclosed the prescription and his note in one cover, handed them to her, and slipped a sovereign into her hand. He whispered, "Be prudent."

"I'm dark, sir," said she: and went off briskly homewards, and Alfred stood rapt in dreamy joy, and so self-elated that, had he been furnished like a peacock, he would have instantly become "a thing all eyes," and choked up Jenner's shop, and swept his counter. He had made a step towards familiarity, had written her a letter; and then, if this prescription came, as he suspected, from Dr. Sampson, she would, perhaps, be at the ball. This opened a delightful vista. Meantime, Mrs. Dodd had communicated Sampson's opinion to Julia, adding that there was a prescription besides, gone to be made up. "However, he insists on your going to this ball."

Julia begged hard to be excused: said she was in no humor for balls: and, Mrs. Dodd objecting that the tickets had actually been purchased, she asked leave to send them to the Dartons: "They will be a treat to Rose and Alice; they seldom go out: mamma, I do so fear they are poorer than people think. May I?"

"It would be but kind," said Mrs. Dodd. "Though really, why my child should always be sacrificed to other people's children" —

"Oh, a mighty sacrifice!" said Julia. She sat down and enclosed the tickets to Rose Darton, with a little sugared note. Sarah being out, Elizabeth took it. Sarah met her at the gate, but did not announce her return: she lurked in ambush till Julia happened to go to her own room, then followed her, and handed Alfred's misgiving, and watched her slyly, and, being herself expedi-

tious as the wind in matters of the heart, took it for granted the enclosure was something very warm indeed; so she said with feigned simplicity, "I suppose it is all right now, miss?" and retreated swelling with a secret, and tormented her fellow-servants all day with innuendoes dark as Erebus.

Julia read the note again and again: her heart beat at those few ceremonious lines. "He does not like me to be talked of," she said to herself. "How good he is! What trouble he takes about me! Ah! *he will be there.*"

She divined rightly; on Wednesday, at ten, Alfred Hardie was in the ballroom. It was a magnificent room, well lighted, and at present not half filled, though dancing had commenced. The figure Alfred sought was not there, and he wondered he had been so childish as to hope she would come to a city ball. He played the fine gentleman; would not dance. He got near the door with another Oxonian, and tried to avenge himself for her absence, on the townspeople who were there, by quizzing them.

But in the middle of this amiable occupation, and, indeed, in the middle of a sentence, he stopped short, and his heart throbbed, and he thrilled from head to foot; for two ladies glided in at the door, and passed up the room with the unpretending composure of well-bred people. They were equally remarkable; but Alfred saw only the radiant young creature in flowing muslin, with the narrowest sash in the room, and no ornament but a necklace of large pearls, and her own vivid beauty. She had altered her mind about coming, with apologies for her vacillating disposition so penitent and disproportionate, that her indulgent and unsuspecting mother was really quite amused. Alfred was not so happy as to know that she had changed her mind with his note.

Perhaps even this knowledge could have added little to that exquisite moment, when, unhopèd for, she passed close to him, and the fragrant air from her brushed his cheek; and seemed to whisper, "Follow me, and be my slave."

CHAPTER IV.

HE did follow her, and, convinced that she would be engaged ten deep in five minutes, hustled up to the master of the ceremonies and begged an introduction. The great banker's son was attended to at once. Julia saw them coming, as her sex can see, without looking. Her eyes were on fire, and a delicious blush on her cheeks, when the M. C. introduced Mr. Alfred Hardie with due pomp. He asked her to dance.

"I am engaged for this dance, sir," said she softly.

"The next?" asked Hardie, timidly.

"With pleasure."

But when they had got so far they were both seized with bashful silence; and, just as Alfred was going to try and break it, Cornet Bosanquet, aged eighteen, height five feet four inches, strutted up with clanking heel, and, glancing haughtily up at him, carried Julia off, like a steam-tug towing away some fair schooner. To these little thorns society treats all anxious lovers; but the incident was new to Alfred, and discomposed him, and, besides, he had nosed a rival in Sampson's prescription. So now he thought to himself, "That little ensign is 'his puppy.'"

To get rid of Mrs. Dodd, he offered to conduct her to a seat. She thanked him; she would rather stand where she could see her daughter dance. On this he took her to the embrasure of a window opposite where Julia and her partner stood, and they entered a circle of spectators. The band struck up, and the solemn skating began.

"Who is this lovely creature in white?" asked a

middle-aged solicitor. "In white? I do not see any beauty in white," replied his daughter. "Why, there, before your eyes," said the gentleman, loudly.

"What, that girl dancing with the little captain? I don't see much beauty in her. *And* what a rubbishing dress."

"It never cost a pound, making and all," suggested another Barkingtonian nymph.

"But what splendid pearls!" said a third. "Can they be real?"

"Real? what an idea!" ejaculated a fourth. "Who puts on real pearls as big as peas with muslin at twenty pence the yard?"

"Weasels!" muttered Alfred, and quivered all over; and he felt to Mrs. Dodd so like a savage going to spring, that she laid her hand upon his wrist, and said gently, but with authority, "Be calm, sir! and oblige me by not noticing these people."

Then they threw dirt on her bouquet, and then on her shoes, while she was winding in and out before their eyes a grace, and her soft muslin drifting and flowing like an appropriate cloud round a young goddess.

"A little starch would make it set out better. It's as limp as a towel on the line."

"I'll be sworn it was washed at home."

"Where it was made."

"I call it a rag, not a gown."

"Do let us move," whispered Alfred.

"I am very comfortable here," whispered Mrs. Dodd. "How can these things annoy my ears while I have eyes? Look at her; she is the best-dressed lady in the room. Her muslin is Indian, and of a quality unknown to these provincial shopkeepers: a rajah gave it us; her pearls were my mother's, and have been in every court in Europe; and she herself is beautiful, would be beautiful

dressed like the dowdies who are criticising her; and I think, sir, she dances as well as any lady can encumbered with an atom that does not know the figure." All this with the utmost placidity.

Then, as if to extinguish all doubt, Julia flung them a heavenly smile; she had been furtively watching them all the time, and she saw they were talking about her.

The other Oxonian squeezed up to Hardie. "Do you know the beauty? She smiled your way."

"Ah!" said Hardie, deliberately, "you mean that young lady with the court pearls, in that exquisite Indian muslin, which floats so gracefully, while the other muslin girls are all crimp and stiff, like little pigs clad in crackling?"

"Ha! ha! ha! Yes. Introduce me."

"I could not take such a liberty with the queen of the ball."

Mrs. Dodd smiled, but felt nervous and ill at ease. She thought to herself, "Now, here is a generous, impetuous thing." As for the hostile party, staggered at first by the masculine insolence of young Hardie, it soon recovered, and, true to its sex, attacked him obliquely, through his white ladye.

"Who is the beauty of the ball?" asked one, haughtily.

"I don't know; but not that mawkish thing in limp muslin."

"I should say Miss Hetherington is the belle," suggested a third.

"Which is Miss Hetherington?" asked the Oxonian coolly of Alfred.

"Oh! she won't do for *us*. It is that little chalk-faced girl, dressed in pink with red roses; the pink of vulgarity and bad taste."

At this both Oxonians laughed arrogantly, and Mrs. Dodd withdrew her hand from the speaker's arm, and glided away behind the throng. Julia looked at him



SHE SHARED HER HYMN BOOK WITH HIM.

with marked anxiety. He returned her look, and was sore puzzled what it meant, till he found Mrs. Dodd had withdrawn softly from him; then he stood confused, regretting too late he had not obeyed her positive request, and tried to imitate her dignified forbearance.

The quadrille ended. He instantly stepped forward, and, bowing politely to the cornet, said authoritatively, "Mrs. Dodd sends me to conduct you to her. With your permission, sir." His arm was offered and taken before the little warrior knew where he was.

He had her on his arm, soft, light, and fragrant as zephyr, and her cool breath wooing his neck; oh, the thrill of that moment! but her first word was to ask him, with considerable anxiety, "Why did mamma leave you?"

"Miss Dodd, I am the most unhappy of men."

"No doubt, no doubt," said she a little crossly. She added with one of her gushes of *naïveté*, "and I shall be unhappy too if you go and displease mamma."

"What could I do? A gang of snobesses were detracting from — somebody. To speak plainly, they were running down — the loveliest of her sex. Your mamma told me to keep quiet. And so I did till I got a fair chance, and then I gave it them in their teeth." He ground his own, and added, "I think I was very good not to kick them."

Julia colored with pleasure, and proceeded to turn it off. "Oh! most forbearing and considerate," said she. "Ah! by the way, I think I did hear some ladies express a misgiving as to the pecuniary value of my costume. Ha! ha! Oh — you — foolish! Fancy noticing that! Why, it is in little sneers that the approval of the ladies shows itself at a ball, and it is a much sincerer compliment than the gentlemen's bombastical praises, 'the fairest of her sex,' and so on, that none but the 'silliest of her sex' believe."

“Miss Dodd, I never said the fairest of her sex. I said the loveliest.”

“Oh! that alters the case entirely,” said Julia, whose spirits were mounting with the lights and music, and Alfred’s company; “so now come and be reconciled to the best and wisest of her sex; ay! and the beautifullest, if you but knew her sweet, dear, darling face as I do. There she is; let us fly.

“Mamma, here is a penitent for you, real or feigned, I don’t know which.”

“Real, Mrs. Dodd,” said Alfred. “I had no right to disobey you and risk a scene. You served me right by abandoning me. I feel the rebuke and its justice. Let me hope your vengeance will go no further.”

Mrs. Dodd smiled at the grandiloquence of youth, and told him he had mistaken her character. “I saw I had acquired a generous, hot-headed ally, who was bent on doing battle with insects, so I withdrew; but so I should at Waterloo, or anywhere else where people put themselves in a passion.”

The band struck up again.

“Ah!” said Julia, “and I promised you this dance; but it is a waltz, and my guardian angel objects to the *valse à deux temps*.”

“Decidedly. Should all the mothers in England permit their daughters to romp and wrestle in public, and call it waltzing, I must stand firm till they return to their senses.”

Julia looked at Alfred despondently. He took his cue, and said with a smile, “Well, perhaps it is a little rompy; a donkey’s gallop, and then twirl her like a mop.”

“Since you admit that, perhaps you can waltz properly?” said Mrs. Dodd.

Alfred said he ought. He had given his whole soul to it in Germany last long.

"Then I can have the pleasure of dropping the tyrant. Away with you both while there is room to circulate."

Alfred took his partner delicately; they made just two ratlike steps forward, and melted into the old-fashioned waltz.

It was an exquisite moment. To most young people love comes after a great deal of waltzing. But this pair brought the awakened tenderness and trembling sensibilities of two burning hearts to this their first intoxicating whirl. To them, therefore, every thing was an event, everything was a thrill: the first meeting and timid pressure of their hands, the first delicate enfolding of her supple waist by his strong arm but trembling hand, the delightful unison of their unerring feet, the movement, the music, the soft delicious whirl, her cool breath saluting his neck, his ardent but now liquid eyes seeking hers tenderly and drinking them deep, hers that now and then sipped his so sweetly; all these were new and separate joys, that linked themselves in one soft delirium of bliss. It was not a waltz, it was an ecstasy.

Starting almost alone, this peerless pair danced a gauntlet. On each side admiration and detraction buzzed all the time.

"Beautiful! They are turning in the air."

"Quite gone by. That's how the old fogies dance."

Chorus of shallow males. How well she waltzes.

Chorus of shallow females. How well he waltzes.

But they noted neither praise nor detraction; they saw nothing, heard nothing, felt nothing, but themselves and the other music, till two *valsers à deux temps* plunged into them. Thus smartly reminded they had not earth all to themselves, they laughed good-humoredly, and paused.

"Ah! I am happy!" gushed from Julia. She blushed at herself, and said severely, "You dance very well, sir."

This was said to justify her unguarded admission, and did, after a fashion. "I think it is time to go to mamma," said she demurely.

"So soon; and I had so much to say to you."

"Oh! very well. I am all attention."

The sudden facility offered set Alfred stammering a little. "I wanted to apologize to you for something — you are so good, you seem to have forgotten it — but I dare not hope that — I mean at Henley — when the beauty of your character, and your goodness, so overpowered me, that a fatal impulse" —

"What do you mean, sir?" said Julia, looking him full in the face, like an offended lion, while, with true feminine and Julian inconsistency, her bosom fluttered like a dove. "I never exchanged one word with you in my life before to-day; and I never shall again if you pretend the contrary."

Alfred stood stupefied, and looked at her in piteous amazement.

"I value your acquaintance highly, Mr. Hardie, now I have made it, as acquaintances are made; but please to observe, I never saw you before — scarcely; not even in church."

"As you please," said he, recovering his wits in part. "What you say, I'll swear to."

"Then I say, never remind a lady of what you ought to wish her to forget."

"I was a fool. And you are an angel of tact and goodness."

"Oh, now I am sure it is time to join mamma," said she, in the driest, drollest way. "*Valsons*."

They waltzed down to Mrs. Dodd, exchanging hearts at every turn, and they took a good many in the space of a round table, for in truth both were equally loath to part.

At two o'clock Mrs. Dodd resumed commonplace views of a daughter's health, and rose to go.

Her fly had played her false, and, being our island home, it rained buckets. Alfred ran, before they could stop him, and caught a fly. He was dripping. Mrs. Dodd expressed her regrets; he told her it did not matter; for him the ball was now over, the flowers faded, and the lights darkness visible.

"The extravagance of these children!" said Mrs. Dodd to Julia, with a smile, as soon as he was out of hearing. Julia made no reply.

Next day she was at evening church; the congregation was very sparse. The first glance revealed Alfred Hardie standing in the very next pew. He wore a calm front of conscious rectitude, under which peeped sheep-faced misgivings as to the result of this advance; for, like all true lovers, he was half impudence, half timidity; and both on the grand scale.

Now, Julia in a ballroom was one creature, another in church. After the first surprise, which sent the blood for a moment to her cheek, she found he had come without a prayer-book. She looked sadly and half reproachfully at him; then put her white hand calmly over the wooden partition, and made him read with her out of her book. She shared her hymn-book with him, too, and sang her Maker's praise modestly and soberly, but earnestly, and quite undisturbed by her lover's presence. It seemed as if this pure creature was drawing him to heaven holding by that good book, and by her touching voice. He felt good all over. To be like her he tried to bend his whole mind on the prayers of the Church, and for the first time realized how beautiful they are.

After service he followed her to the door. Island home again, by the pailful; and she had a thick shawl,

but no umbrella. He had brought a large one on the chance; he would see her home.

“Quite unnecessary, it is so near.”

He insisted; she persisted; and, persisting, yielded. They said but little, yet they seemed to interchange volumes; and, at each gas-light they passed, they stole a look, and treasured it to feed on.

That night was one broad step more towards the great happiness, or great misery, which awaits a noble love. Such loves, somewhat rare in nature, have lately become so very rare in fiction, that I have ventured, with many misgivings, to detail the peculiarities of its rise and progress. But now for a time it advanced on beaten tracks; Alfred had the right to call at Albion Villa, and he came twice; once when Mrs. Dodd was out. This was the time he stayed the two hours. A Mrs. James invited Jane and him to tea and exposition. There he met Julia and Edward, who had just returned. Edward was taken with Jane Hardie's face and dovelike eyes; eyes that dwelt with a soft and chastened admiration on his masculine face and his model form, and their owner felt she had received “a call” to watch over his spiritual weal. So they paired off.

Julia's fluctuating spirits settled now into a calm, demure complacency. Her mother, finding this strange remedial virtue in youthful society, gave young parties, inviting Jane and Alfred in their turn. Jane hesitated; but, as she could no longer keep Julia from knowing her worldly brother, and hoped a way might be opened for her to rescue Edward, she relaxed her general rule, which was to go into no company unless some religious service formed part of the entertainment. Yet her conscience was ill at ease; and, to set them an example, she took care, when she asked the Dodds in return, to have a clergyman there of her own party, who could pray and expound with unction.

Mrs. Dodd, not to throw cold water on what seemed to gratify her children, accepted Miss Hardie's invitation; but she never intended to go, and at the last moment wrote to say she was slightly indisposed. The nature of her *indisposition* she revealed to Julia alone: "That young lady keeps me on thorns. I never feel secure she will not say or do something extravagant or unusual; she seems to suspect sobriety and good taste of being in league with impiety. Here I succeed in bridling her a little; but encounter a female enthusiast in her own house? *merci!* After all, there must be something good in her, since she is your friend, and you are hers; but I have something more serious to say before you go there. It is about her brother; he is a flirt; in fact, a notorious one, more than one lady tells me."

Julia was silent, but began to be very uneasy; they were sitting and talking after sunset, yet without candles; she profited for once by that prodigious gap in the intelligence of "the sex."

"I hear he pays you compliments, and I have seen a disposition to single you out. Now, my love, you have the good sense to know that, whatever a young gentleman of that age says to you, he says to many other ladies; but your experience is not equal to your sense, so profit by mine; a girl of your age must never be talked of with a person of the other sex; it is fatal, fatal! but if you permit yourself to be singled out, you will be talked of, and distress those who love you. It is easy to avoid injudicious duets in society: oblige me by doing so to-night." To show how much she was in earnest, Mrs. Dodd hinted that, were her admonition neglected, she should regret for once having kept clear of an enthusiast.

Julia had no alternative; she assented in a faint voice.

After a pause she faltered out, "And suppose he should esteem me seriously?"

Mrs. Dodd replied quickly, "Then that would be much worse. But," said she, "I have no apprehensions on that score; you are a child, and he is a precocious boy, and rather a flirt. But forewarned is forearmed. So now run away and dress, sweet one; my lecture is quite ended."

The sensitive girl went up to her room with a heavy heart. All the fears she had lulled of late revived. She saw plainly now that Mrs. Dodd only accepted Alfred as a pleasant acquaintance; as a son-in-law he was out of the question. "Oh, what will she say when she knows all?" thought Julia.

Next day, sitting near the window, she saw him coming up the road. After the first movement of pleasure at the bare sight of him, she was sorry he had come. Mamma's suspicions awake at last, and here he was again; the third call in one fortnight! She dared not risk an interview with him, ardent and unguarded, under that penetrating eye, which she felt would now be on the watch. She rose hurriedly, said as carelessly as she could, "I am going to the school;" and, tying her bonnet on all in a flurry, whipped out at the back door with her shawl in her hand, just as Sarah opened the front door to Alfred. She then shuffled on her shawl, and whisked through the little shrubbery into the open field, and reached a path that led to the school; and so gratified was she at her dexterity in evading her favorite, that she hung her head, and went murmuring, "Cruel, cruel, cruel!"

Alfred entered the drawing-room gayly, with a good-sized card and a prepared speech. His was not the visit of a friend but a functionary; the treasurer of the cricket-ground come to book two of his eighteen to play

against the All England Eleven next month. "As for you, my worthy sir (turning to Edward), I shall just put you down without ceremony. But I must ask leave to book Captain Dodd. Mrs. Dodd, I come at the universal desire of the club; they say it is sure to be a dull match without Captain Dodd. Besides, he is a capital player."

"Mamma, don't you be caught by his chaff," said Edward, quietly. "Papa is no player at all. Anything more unlike cricket than his way of making runs!"

"But he makes them, old fellow; now you and I, at Lord's the other day, played in first-rate form: left shoulder well up, and achieved, with neatness, precision, dexterity, and despatch, the British duck's-egg."

"*Misericorde!* What is that?" inquired Mrs. Dodd.

"Why, a round O," said the other Oxonian, coming to his friend's aid.

"And what is that, pray?"

Alfred told her "The round O," which had yielded to "the duck's egg," and was becoming obsolete, meant the cipher set by the scorer against a player's name, who is out without making a run.

"I see," sighed Mrs. Dodd. "The jargon of the day penetrates to your very sports and games. And why British?"

"Oh, 'British' is redundant: thrown in by the universities."

"But what does it mean?"

"It means nothing. That is the beauty of it. British is inserted in imitation of our idols, the Greeks; they adored redundancy."

In short, poor Alfred, though not an M.P., was talking to put off time, till Julia should come in; so he now favored Mrs. Dodd, of all people, with a flowery description of her husband's play, which I, who have not his

motive for volubility, suppress. However, he wound up with the captain's "moral influence." "Last match," said he, "Barkington did not do itself justice. Several, that could have made a stand, were frightened out, rather than bowled, by the London professionals. Then Captain Dodd went in, and treated those artists with the same good-humored contempt he would a parish bowler; and, in particular, sent Mynne's over-tossed balls flying over his head for five, or to square leg for four; and, on his retiring with twenty-five, scored in eight minutes, the remaining Barkingtonians were less funky, and made some fair scores."

Mrs. Dodd smiled a little ironically at this tirade, but said she thought she might venture to promise Mr. Dodd's co-operation, should he reach home in time. Then, to get rid of Alfred before Julia's return, the amiable worldling turned to Edward. "Your sister will not be back, so you may as well ring the bell for luncheon at once. Perhaps Mr. Hardie will join us?"

Alfred declined, and took his leave with far less alacrity than he had entered; Edward went down-stairs with him.

"Miss Dodd gone on a visit?" asked Alfred, affecting carelessness.

"Only to the school. By-the-by, I will go and fetch her."

"No, don't do that; call on my sister instead, and then you will pull me out of a scrape. I promised to bring her here; but her saintship was so long adorning 'the poor perishable body,' that I came alone."

"I don't understand you," said Edward. "I am not the attraction here; it is Julia."

"How do you know that? When a young lady interests herself in an undergraduate's soul, it is a pretty sure sign she likes the looks of him. But perhaps you

don't want to be converted; if so, keep clear of *her*. 'Bar the fell dragon's blighting way; but shun that lovely snare.'

"On the contrary," said Edward, calmly, "I only wish she *could* make me as good as she is, or half as good."

"Give her the chance, old fellow, and then it won't be your fault if she makes a mess of it. Call at two, and Jenny will receive you very kindly, and will show you you are in the 'gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity.' Now, won't that be nice?"

"I will go," said Edward, gravely.

They parted. Where Alfred went, the reader can, perhaps, guess; Edward to luncheon.

"Mamma," said he, with that tranquillity which sat so well on him, "don't you think Alfred Hardie is spoony upon our Julia?"

Mrs. Dodd suppressed a start, and (perhaps to gain time before replying sincerely) said she had not the honor of knowing what "spoony" meant.

"Why, sighs for her and dies for her, and fancies she is prettier than Miss Hardie. He must be over head and ears to think that."

"Fie, child!" was the answer. "If I thought so, I should withdraw from their acquaintance. Excuse me; I must put on my bonnet at once, not to lose this fine afternoon."

Edward did not relish her remark; it menaced more spoons than one. However, he was not the man to be cast down at a word; he lighted a cigar, and strolled towards Hardie's house. Mr. Hardie, senior, had left three days ago on a visit to London. Miss Hardie received him; he passed the afternoon in calm complacency, listening reverently to her admonitions, and looking her softly out of countenance, and into earthly affections, with his lion eyes.

Meantime his remark, so far from really seeming foolish to Mrs. Dodd, was the true reason for her leaving him so abruptly. "Even this dear slow thing sees it," thought she. She must talk to Julia more seriously, and would go to the school at once. She went up-stairs, and put on her bonnet and shawl before the glass, then moulded on her gloves, and came down equipped. On the stairs was a large window looking upon the open field: she naturally cast her eyes through it, in the direction she was going, and what did she see but a young lady and gentleman coming slowly down the path towards the villa. Mrs. Dodd bit her lip with vexation, and looked keenly at them, to divine on what terms they were. And the more she looked, the more uneasy she grew.

The head, the hand, the whole body of a sensitive young woman walking beside him she loves, betray her heart to experienced eyes watching unseen, and especially to female eyes. And why did Julia move so slowly, especially after that warning? Why was her head averted from that encroaching boy, and herself so near him? Why not keep her distance, and look him full in the face? Mrs. Dodd's first impulse was that of leopardesses, lionesses, hens, and all the mothers in nature, — to dart from her ambush and protect her young, but she controlled it by a strong effort. It seemed wiser to descry the truth, and then act with resolution; besides, the young people were now almost at the shrubbery, so the mischief, if any, was done.

They entered the shrubbery.

To Mrs. Dodd's surprise and dismay, they did not come out this side so quickly. She darted her eye into the plantation, and lo! Alfred had seized the fatal opportunity foliage offers, even when thinnish: he held Julia's hand, and was pleading eagerly for something

she seemed not disposed to grant, for she turned away and made an effort to leave him. But Mrs. Dodd, standing there quivering with maternal anxiety, and hot with shame, could not but doubt the sincerity of that graceful resistance. If she had been quite in earnest, Julia had fire enough in her to box the little wretch's ears. She ceased even to doubt, when she saw that her daughter's opposition ended in his getting hold of two hands instead of one, and devouring them with kisses, while Julia still drew her head and neck away; but the rest of her supple frame seemed to yield and incline, and draw softly towards her besieger by some irresistible spell.

"I can bear no more!" gasped Mrs. Dodd aloud, and turned to hasten and part them; but even as she curved her stately neck to go, she caught the lovers parting, and a very pretty one, too, if she could but have looked at it, as these things ought always to be looked at, artistically.

Julia's head and lovely throat, unable to draw the rest of her away, compromised: they turned, declined, drooped, and rested one half moment on her captor's shoulder, like a settling dove; the next, she scudded from him, and made for the house alone.

Mrs. Dodd, deeply indignant, but too wise to court a painful interview with her own heart beating high, went into the drawing-room, and there sat down to recover some little composure. But she was hardly seated when Julia's innocent voice was heard calling, "Mamma, mamma!" and soon she came bounding into the drawing-room, brimful of good news, her cheeks as red as fire, and her eyes wet with happy tears, and there confronted her mother, who had started up at her footstep, and now, with one hand nipping the back of the chair convulsively, stood lofty, looking strangely agitated and hostile.

The two ladies eyed one another, silent, yet expressive, like a picture facing a statue; but soon the color died out of Julia's face as well, and she began to cower with vague fears before that stately figure, so gentle and placid usually, but now so discomposed and stern.

"Where have you been, Julia?"

"Only at the school," she faltered.

"Who was your companion home?"

"Oh, don't be angry with me! It was Alfred."

"Alfred! His Christian name! You try my patience too hard."

"Forgive me! I was not to blame this time indeed, indeed! You frighten me. What will become of me? What have I done, for my own mamma to look at me so?"

Mrs. Dodd groaned. "Was that young coquette I watched from my window the child I have reared? No face on earth is to be trusted after this. 'What have you done,' indeed? Only risked your own mother's esteem, and nearly broken her heart!" And with these words her own courage began to give way, and she sank into a chair with a deep sigh.

At this Julia screamed, and threw herself on her knees beside her, and cried, "Kill me! oh, pray kill me, but don't drive me to despair with such cruel words and looks!" and fell to sobbing so wildly that Mrs. Dodd altered her tone with almost ludicrous rapidity. "There, do not terrify me with your impetuosity, after grieving me so. Be calm, child; let me see whether I cannot remedy your sad imprudence, and, that I may, pray tell me the whole truth. How did this come about?"

In reply to this question, which she somewhat mistook, Julia sobbed out, "He met me c-coming out of the school, and asked to s-see me home. I said, 'No, thank

you,' because I th-thought of your warning. 'Oh, yes,' said he, and *would* walk with me, and keep saying he loved me. So, to stop him, I said, 'M-much obliged, but I was b-busy and had no time to flirt.' — 'Nor have I the in-inclination,' said he. 'That is not what others say of you,' said I, — you know what you t-told me, mamma, — so at last he said d-did ever he ask any lady to be his wife? 'I suppose not,' said I, 'or you would be p-p-private property by now instead of p-public.'"

"Now there was a foolish speech; as much as to say nobody could resist him."

"W-wasn't it? And n-no more they could. You have no idea how he makes love; *so* unladylike; keeps advancing and advancing, and never once retreats, nor even st-ops. 'But I ask *you* to be my wife,' said he. O mamma, I trembled so! Why did I tremble? I don't know. I made myself cold and haughty: 'I should make no reply to such ridiculous questions; say that to mamma, if you dare!' I said."

Mrs. Dodd bit her lip, and said, "Was there ever such simplicity?"

"Simple! Why, that was my cunning. You are the only creature he is afraid of, so I thought to stop his mouth with you. But instead of that my lord said calmly, 'That was understood: he loved me too well to steal me from her to whom he was indebted for me.' Oh, he has always an answer ready. And that makes him such a p-pest."

"It was an answer that did him credit."

"Dear mamma, now did it not? Then at parting he said he would come to-morrow and ask you for my hand, but I must intercede with you first, or you would be sure to say 'No.' So I declined to interfere: 'W-w-what was it to me?' I said. He begged and prayed me: 'Was it likely you would give him such a treasure as

me unless I stood his friend?' (For the b-b-brazen thing turns humble now and then.) And O! mamma, he did so implore me to pity him, and kept saying no man ever loved as he loved me, and with his begging and praying me so passionately, oh, so passionately! I felt something warm drop from his poor eyes on my hand. Oh! oh! oh! oh! What could I do? And then, you know, I wanted to get away from him. So I am afraid I did just say 'yes,' but only in a whisper. Mamma, my own, good, kind, darling mamma, have pity on him and on me: we love one another so."

A shower of tender tears gushed out in support of this appeal, and in a moment she was caught up in Love's mighty arms, and her head laid on her mother's yearning bosom. No word was needed to reconcile these two.

After a long silence, Mrs. Dodd said this would be a warning never to judge her sweet child from a distance again, nor unheard. "And therefore," said she, "let me hear from your own lips how so serious an attachment could spring up; why, it is scarcely a month since you were first introduced at that ball."

"Mamma," murmured Julia, hanging her head, "you are mistaken: we knew each other before."

Mrs. Dodd looked all astonishment.

"Now I *will* ease my heart," said Julia impetuously, addressing some invisible obstacle. "I tell you I am sick of having secrets from my own mother." And with this out it all came. She told the story of her heart better than I have, and, woman-like, dwelt on the depths of loyalty and delicate love she had read in Alfred's moonlit face that night at Henley. She said no eloquence could have touched her like it. "Mamma, something said to me, 'Ay, look at him well, for that is your husband to be.'" She even tried to solve the mystery of her *soi-disant* sickness: "I was disturbed by a

feeling so new and so powerful,¹ but, above all, by having a secret from you: the first, the last."

"Well, darling, then why have a secret? Why not trust me, your friend as well as your mother?"

"Ah! why, indeed? I am a puzzle to myself. I wanted you to know, and yet I could not tell you. I kept giving you hints, and hoped so you would take them, and *make* me speak out. But when I tried to tell you plump, something kept pull — pull — pulling me inside, and I couldn't. Mark my words: some day it will turn out that I am neither more nor less than a fool."

Mrs. Dodd slighted this ingenious solution. She said, after a moment's reflection, that the fault of this misunderstanding lay between the two. "I remember now I have had many hints: my mind must surely have gone to sleep. I was a poor simple woman who thought her daughter was to be always a child. And you were very wrong to go and set a limit to your mother's love: there is none, — none whatever." She added, "I must import a little prudence and respect for the world's opinion into this new connection; but whoever you love shall find no enemy in me."

Next day Alfred came to know his fate. He was received with ceremonious courtesy. At first he was a good deal embarrassed, but this was no sooner seen than it was relieved by Mrs. Dodd with tact and gentleness. When her turn came she said, "Your papa? Of course you have communicated this step to him?"

Alfred looked a little confused, and said, "No: he left for London two days ago, as it happens."

"That is unfortunate," said Mrs. Dodd. "Your best

¹ Perhaps even this faint attempt at self-analysis was due to the influence of Dr. Whately, for, by nature, young ladies of this age seldom turn the eye inward.

plan would be to write to him at once: I need hardly tell you that we shall enter no family without an invitation from its head."

Alfred replied that he was well aware of that, and that he knew his father, and could answer for him. "No doubt," said Mrs. Dodd, "but, as a matter of reasonable form, I prefer he should answer for himself." Alfred would write by this post. "It is a mere form," said he, "for my father has but one answer to his children: 'Please yourselves.' He sometimes adds, 'and how much money shall you want?' These are his two formulæ."

He then delivered a glowing eulogy on his father; and Mrs. Dodd, to whom the boy's character was now a grave and anxious study, saw with no common satisfaction his cheek flush, and his eyes moisten, as he dwelt on the calm, sober, unvarying affection and reasonable indulgence he and his sister had met with all their lives from the best of parents. Returning to the topic of topics, he proposed an engagement. "I have a ring in my pocket," said this brisk wooer, looking down. But this Mrs. Dodd thought premature and unnecessary. "You are nearly of age," said she, "and then you will be able to marry if you are in the same mind." But, upon being warmly pressed, she half conceded even this. "Well," said she, "on receiving your father's consent, you can *propose* an engagement to Julia, and she shall use her own judgment; but, until then, you will not even mention such a thing to her. May I count on so much forbearance from you, sir?"

"Dear Mrs. Dodd," said Alfred, "of course you may. I should indeed be ungrateful if I could not wait a post for that. May I write to my father here?" added he naïvely.

Mrs. Dodd smiled, furnished him with writing materials, and left him with a polite excuse.

ALBION VILLA, Sept. 29.

MY DEAR FATHER, — You are too thorough a man of the world, and too well versed in human nature, to be surprised at hearing that I, so long invulnerable, have at last formed a devoted attachment to one whose beauty, goodness, and accomplishments I will not now enlarge upon; they are indescribable, and you will very soon see them and judge for yourself. The attachment, though short in weeks and months, has been a very long one in hopes, and fears, and devotion. I should have told you of it before you left, but, in truth, I had no idea I was so near the goal of all my earthly hopes; there were many difficulties; but these have just cleared away almost miraculously, and nothing now is wanting to my happiness but your consent. It would be affectation, or worse, in me to doubt that you will grant it. But, in a matter so delicate, I venture to ask you for something more: the mother of my ever and only beloved Julia is a lady of high breeding and sentiments; she will not let her daughter enter any family without a cordial invitation from its head. Indeed, she has just told me so. I ask, therefore, not your bare consent, of which I am sure, since my happiness for life depends on it, but a consent so gracefully worded — and who can do this better than you? — as to gratify the just pride and sensibilities of the high-minded family, about to confide its brightest ornament to my care.

My dear father, in the midst of felicity almost more than any mortal, the thought has come that this letter is my first step towards leaving the paternal roof under which I have been so happy all my life, thanks to you. I should indeed be unworthy of all your goodness if this thought caused me no emotion.

Yet I do but yield to nature's universal law. And, should I be master of my own destiny, I will not go far from you. I have been unjust to Barkington; or rather, I have echoed, without thought, Oxonian prejudices and affectation. On mature reflection, I know no better residence for a married man.

Do you remember about a year ago you mentioned a Miss Lucy Fountain to us as "the most perfect gentlewoman you had ever met"? Well, strange to say, it is that very lady's daughter; and I think when you see her you will say the breed

has anything but declined, in spite of Horace and his "*dam-nosa quid non.*" Her brother is my dearest friend, and she is Jenny's; so a more happy alliance for all parties was never projected.

Write to me by return, dear father, and believe me,
Ever your dutiful and grateful son,

ALFRED HARDIE.

As he concluded, Julia came in, and he insisted on her reading this masterpiece. She hesitated. Then he told her with juvenile severity that a good husband always shares his letters with his wife.

"His wife? Alfred!" and she colored all over. "Don't call me *names*," said she, turning it off, after her fashion. "I can't bear it; it makes me tremble. With fury."

"This will never do, sweet one," said Alfred gravely. "You and I are to have no separate existence, now; you are to be I, and I am to be you. Come!"

"No; you read me so much of it as is proper for me to hear. I shall not like it so well from your lips; but never mind."

When he came to read it, he appreciated the delicacy that had tempered her curiosity. He did not read it all to her, but nearly.

"It is a beautiful letter," said she; "a little pom-pouser than mamma and I write. 'The paternal roof!' But all that becomes you; you are a scholar; and, dear Alfred, if I should separate you from your papa, I will never estrange you from him; oh, never, never! May I go for my work? for, methinks, O most erudite, the 'maternal dame,' on domestic cares intent, hath confided to her offspring the recreation of your highness." The gay creature dropped him a courtesy, and fled to tell Mrs. Dodd the substance of "the sweet letter the dear high-flown thing had written."

By then he had folded and addressed it, she returned and brought her work; charity children's great cloaks; her mother had cut them, and in the height of the fashion, to Jane Hardie's dismay; and Julia was binding, hooding, etcætering them.

How demurely she bent her lovely head over her charitable work, while Alfred poured his tale into her ears! How careful she was not to speak, when there was a chance of his speaking! How often she said one thing so as to express its opposite, a process for which she might have taken out a patent! How she and Alfred compared heart-notes, and their feelings at each stage of their passion! Their hearts put forth tendril after tendril, and so curled and clung round each other.

In the afternoon of the second blissful day, Julia suddenly remembered that this was dull for her mother. To have such a thought was to fly to her; and she flew so swiftly that she caught Mrs. Dodd in tears, and trying adroitly and vainly to hide them.

"What is the matter? I am a wretch. I have left you alone."

"Do not think me so peevish, love! you have but surprised the natural regrets of a mother at the loss of her child."

"O mamma," said Julia warmly, "and do you think all the marriage in the world can ever divide you and me — can make me lukewarm to my own sweet, darling, beautiful, blessed, angel mother? Look at me; I am as much your Julia as ever; and shall be while I live. Your son is your son till he gets him a wife; but your daughter's your daughter, ALL — THE — DAYS — OF HER LIFE."

Divine power of native eloquence; with this trite distich you made hexameters tame; it gushed from that great young heart with a sweet infantine ardor, that

even virtue can only pour when young, and youth when virtuous; and, at the words I have emphasized by the poor device of capitals, two lovely, supple arms flew wide out like a soaring albatross's wings, and then went all round the sad mother, and gathered every bit of her up to the generous young bosom.

"I know it, I know it!" cried Mrs. Dodd, kissing her; "I shall never lose my daughter while she breathes. But I am losing my child. You are turning to a woman visibly; and you were such a happy child. Hence my misgivings, and these weak tears, which you have dried with a word, see!" and she contrived to smile. "And now go down, dearest; he may be impatient; men's love is so fiery."

The next day Mrs. Dodd took Julia apart and asked her whether there was an answer from Mr. Hardie. Julia replied, from Alfred, that Jane had received a letter last night, and, to judge by the contents, Mr. Hardie must have left London before Alfred's letter got there. "He is gone to see poor Uncle Thomas."

"Why do you call him 'poor'?"

"Oh, he is not very clever; has not much mind, Alfred says; indeed, hardly any."

"You alarm me, Julia!" cried Mrs. Dodd: "what? madness in the family you propose to marry into?"

"Oh, no, mamma," said Julia, in a great hurry; "no madness; only a little imbecility."

Mrs. Dodd's lip curved at this Julian answer; but just then her mind was more drawn to another topic. A serious doubt passed through her, whether, if Mr. Hardie did not write soon, she ought not to limit his son's attendance on her daughter. "He follows her about like a little dog," said she half-fretfully.

Next day, by previous invitation, Dr. Sampson made Albion Villa his headquarters. Darting in from London

he found Alfred sitting very close to Julia over a book. "Lordsake!" cried he, "here's 'my puppy,' and 'm' enthusiast,' cheek by chowl." Julia turned scarlet, and Alfred ejaculated so loudly, that Sampson inquired what on airth was the matter now?

"Oh, nothing; only here have I been jealous of my own shadow, and pestering her who 'your puppy' was; and she never would tell me. All I could get from her," added he, turning suddenly from gratitude to revenge, "was — that he was no greater a puppy than yourself, doctor."

"O Alfred, no; I only said no vainer," cried Julia in dismay.

"Well, it is true," said Sampson, contentedly, and proceeded to dissect himself just as he would a stranger. "I am a vain man; a remarkably vain man. But then, I'm a man of great mirit."

"All vain people are that," suggested Alfred dryly.

"Who should know better than you, young Oxford? Y' have got a hidache."

"No, indeed."

"Don't tell lies now. Ye can't deceive me; man, I've an eye like a hawk. And what's that ye're studying with her? Ovid, for a pound."

"No, medicine; a treatise on your favorite organ, the brain; by one Dr. Whately."

"He is chaffing you, doctor," said Edward; "it is logic. He is coaching her, and then she will coach me."

"Then I forbid the chaff-cutting, young Pidant. Logic is an ill plaster to a sore head."

"Oh, 'the labor we delight in, physics pain.'"

"Jinnyus, Jinnyus;

Take care o' your carkuss,"

retorted the master of doggerel. "And that is a pro-

founder remark than you seem to think, by your grinning, all of ye."

Julia settled the question by putting away the book. And she murmured to Alfred, "I wish I could steal your poor dear headaches; you might give me half of them at least; you would, too, if you really loved me."

This sound remonstrance escaped criticism by being nearly inaudible, and by Mrs. Dodd entering at the same moment.

After the first greeting, Sampson asked her with merry arrogance, how his prescription had worked. "Is her sleep broken still, ma'am? Are her spirits up and down? Shall we have to go back t' old Short and his black draught? How's her mookis membrin? An' her biliary ducks? an'— She's off like a flash."

"And no wonder," said Mrs. Dodd, reproachfully.

Thus splashed Sampson among the ducks; one of them did not show her face again till dinner.

Jane Hardie accompanied her brother by invitation. The general amity was diversified, and the mirth nowise lessened, by constant passages of arms between Messrs. Sampson and Alfred Hardie.

After tea came the first contretemps. Sampson liked a game of cards; he could play, yet talk chronothermism, as the fair can knit babies' shoes, and imbibe the poetasters of the day.

Mrs. Dodd had asked Edward to bring a fresh pack. He was seen by his guardian angel to take them out of his pocket and undo them; presently Sampson, in his rapid way, clutched hold of them; and found a slip of paper curled round the ace of spades, with this written very clear in pencil: "REMEMBER THY CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF THY YOUTH!"

"What is this?" cried Sampson, and read it out aloud. Jane Hardie colored, and so betrayed herself. Her

“word in season” had strayed. It was the young and comely Edward she wished to save from the diabolical literature, the painted perdition; and not the uninteresting old sinner Sampson, who proceeded to justify her preference by remarking that “Remember not to trump your partner’s best card, ladies,” would be more to the point.

Everybody, except this hardened personage, was thoroughly uncomfortable. As for Alfred, his face betrayed a degree of youthful mortification, little short of agony. Mrs. Dodd was profoundly disgusted, but fortunately for the Hardies, caught sight of his burning cheeks and compressed lips. “Dr. Sampson,” said she, with cold dignity, “you will, I am sure, oblige me by making no more comments; sincerity is not always discreet, but it is always respectable; it is one of your own titles to esteem. I dare say,” added she with great sweetness, “our resources are not so narrow that we need shock anybody’s prejudices, and, as it happens, I was just going to ask Julia to sing; open the piano, love, and try if you can persuade Miss Hardie to join you in a duet.”

At this, Jane and Julia had an earnest conversation at the piano, and their words, uttered in a low voice, were covered by a contemporaneous discussion between Sampson and Mrs. Dodd.

Jane. No, you must not ask me: I have forsworn these vanities. I have not opened my piano this two years.

Julia. Oh, what a pity! music is so beautiful; and surely we can choose our songs, as easily as our words; ah, how much more easily.

Jane. Oh, I don’t go so far as to call music wicked: but music in society is *such* a snare. At least I found it so; my playing was highly praised; and that

Sampson. Hum! for all that, young ladies’ singing is a poor substitute for cards, and even for conversation.

Mrs. Dodd. That depends upon the singer, I presume.

Sampson. Mai—dear—madam, they all sing alike; just as they all write alike. I can hardly tell one fashionable tune from another: and nobody can tell one word from another, when they cut out all the consonants. N’

stirred up vanity: and so did my singing, with which I had even more reason to be satisfied. Snares! snares!

Julia. Goodness me! I don't find them so. Now you mention it, gentlemen do praise one; but, dear me, they praise every lady, even when we have been singing every other note out of tune. The little unmeaning compliments of society, can they catch anything so great as a soul?

Jane. I pray daily not to be led into temptation, and shall I go into it of my own accord?

Julia. Not if you find it a temptation. At that rate I ought to decline.

Jane. That doesn't follow. My conscience is not a law to yours. Besides, your mamma said "Sing;" and a parent is not to be disobeyed upon a doubt. If papa were to insist on my going to a ball even, or reading a novel, I think I should obey; and lay the whole case before Him.

Mrs. Dodd (from a distance). Come, my dears, Dr. Sampson is getting so impatient for your song.

listen me. This is what I heard sung by a lady last night:—

Ee un Da' ei u aa an oo
By oo eeeeye aa
Vaullee, vaullee, vaullee, vaullee,
Vaullee om is igh eeaa
An ellin in is ud.

Mrs. Dodd. That sounds like gibberish.

Sampson. It is gibberish, but it's Drydenish in articulating mouths. It is,—

He sung Darius great and good,
By too severe a fate
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood.

Mrs. Dodd. I think you exaggerate. I will answer for Julia that she shall speak as distinctly to music as you do in conversation.

Sampson (all unconscious of the tap). Time will show, madam. At present they seem to be in no hurry to spatter us with their word-jelly. Does some spark of pity linger in their marble bos'ns? or do they prefer inaud'ble chit-chat t' inarticulate mewin?

Julia, thus pressed, sang one of those songs that come and go every season. She spoke the words clearly, and with such variety and intelligence, that Sampson recanted, and broke in upon the "Very pretty," "How sweet," and "Who is it by?" of the others, by shouting, "Very weak trash, very cleanly sung. Now give us something worth the wear and tear of your organs. Immortal vaise widded t' immortal sounds; that is what I understand b' a song."

Alfred whispered, "No, no, dearest; sing something suitable to you and me."

“Out of the question. Then go further away, dear; I shall have more courage.”

He obeyed, and she turned over two or three music-books; and finally sang from memory. She cultivated musical memory, having observed the contempt with which men of sense visit the sorry pretenders to music, who are tuneless and songless among the nightingales, and anywhere else away from their books. How will they manage to sing in heaven? Answer me that.

The song Julia Dodd sang on this happy occasion, to meet the humble but heterogeneous views of Messrs. Sampson and Hardie, was a simple, eloquent Irish song, called “Aileen Aroon,” whose history, by-the-by, was a curious one. Early in this century it occurred to somebody to hymn a son of George the Third for his double merit in having been born, and going to a ball. People who thus apply the fine arts in modern days are seldom artists; accordingly, this parasite could not invent a melody; so he coolly stole “Aileen Aroon,” soiled it by inserting sordid and incongruous jerks into the refrain, and calling the stolen and adulterated article “Robin Adair.” An artisan of the same kidney was soon found to write words down to the degraded ditty: and so strong is flunkeyism, and so weak is criticism, in these islands, that the polluted tune actually superseded the clean melody; and this sort of thing, —

Who was in uniform at the ball?

Silly Billy, —

smothered the immortal lines.

But Mrs. Dodd's severe taste in music rejected those ignoble jerks, and her enthusiastic daughter, having the option to hymn immortal Constancy or mortal Fat, decided thus: —

Castles are sacked in war,
Chieftains are scattered far,
Truth is a fixed star,

Aileen aroon.

The way the earnest singer sang these lines is beyond the conception of ordinary singers, public or private. Here one of nature's orators spoke poetry to music with an eloquence as fervid and delicate as ever rung in the Forum. She gave each verse with the same just variety as if she had been reciting, and, when she came to the last, where the thought rises abruptly, and is truly noble, she sang it with the sudden pathos, the weight, and the swelling majesty, of a truthful soul hymning truth with all its powers.

All the hearers, even Sampson, were thrilled, astonished, spell-bound: so can one wave of immortal music and immortal verse (alas! how seldom they meet!) heave the inner man when genius interprets. Judge, then, what it was to Alfred, to whom, with these great words and thrilling tones of her rich, swelling, ringing voice, the darling of his own heart vowed constancy, while her inspired face beamed on him like an angel's.

Even Mrs. Dodd, though acquainted with the song, and with her daughter's rare powers, gazed at her now with some surprise, as well as admiration, and kept a note Sarah had brought her, open, but unread, in her hand, unable to take her eyes from the inspired songstress. However, just before the song ended, she did just glance down, and saw it was signed Richard Hardie. On this her eye devoured it; and in one moment she saw that the writer declined, politely but peremptorily, the proposed alliance between his son and her daughter.

The mother looked up from this paper at that living radiance and incarnate melody in a sort of stupor: it

seemed hardly possible to her that a provincial banker could refuse an alliance with a creature so peerless as that. But so it was; and despite her habitual self-government, Mrs. Dodd's white hand clenched the note till her nails dented it; and she reddened to the brow with anger and mortification.

Julia, whom she had trained never to monopolize attention in society, now left the piano in spite of remonstrance, and soon noticed her mother's face; for from red it had become paler than usual. "Are you unwell, dear?" said she, *sotto voce*.

"No, love."

"Is there anything the matter, then?"

"Hush! We have guests: our first duty is to them." With this Mrs. Dodd rose, and, endeavoring not to look at her daughter at all, went round and drew each of her guests out in turn. It was the very heroism of courtesy; for their presence was torture to her. At last, to her infinite relief, they went, and she was left alone with her children. She sent the servants to bed, saying she would undress Miss Dodd: and accompanied her to her room. There the first thing she did was to lock the door; and the next was to turn round and look at her full.

"I always thought you the most lovable child I ever saw; but I never admired you as I have to-night; my noble, my beautiful daughter, who would grace the highest family in England." With this, Mrs. Dodd began to choke, and kissed Julia eagerly with the tears in her eyes, and drew her with tender, eloquent defiance to her bosom.

"My own mamma," said Julia, softly, "what has happened?"

"My darling," said Mrs. Dodd, trembling a little, "have you pride? have you spirit?"

"I think I have."

"I hope so: for you will need them both. Read that!" And she held out Mr. Hardie's letter, but turned her own head away, not to see her girl's face under the insult.

CHAPTER V.

JULIA took Mr. Hardie's note and read it:—

MADAM, — I have received a very juvenile letter from my son, by which I learn he has formed a sudden attachment to your daughter. He tells me, however, at the same time, that you await my concurrence before giving your consent. I appreciate your delicacy; and it is with considerable regret I now write to inform you this match is out of the question. I have thought it due to you to communicate this to yourself and without delay, and feel sure that you will, under the circumstances, discountenance my son's further visits at your house.

I am, madam,

With sincere respect,

Your faithful servant,

RICHARD HARDIE.

Julia read this letter, and re-read it in silence. It was an anxious moment to the mother.

“Shall our pride be less than this parvenu's?” she faltered. “Tell me yourself, what ought we to do?”

“What we ought to do is, never to let the name of Hardie be mentioned again in this house.”

This reply was very comforting to Mrs. Dodd.

“Shall I write to him, or do you feel strong enough?”

“I feel that, if I do, I may affront him. He had no right to pretend that his father would consent. You write, and then we shall not lose our dignity, though we are insulted.

“I feel so weary, mamma. Life seems ended.

“I could have loved him well. And now show me

how to tear him out of my heart: or what will become of me?"

While Mrs. Dodd wrote to Alfred Hardie, Julia sank down and laid her head on her mother's knees. The note was shown her; she approved it languidly. A long and sad conversation followed; and after kissing her mother and clinging to her, she went to bed chilly and listless, but did not shed a single tear. Her young heart was benumbed by the unexpected blow.

Next morning early Alfred Hardie started gayly to spend the day at Albion Villa. Not a hundred yards from the gate he met Sarah, with Mrs. Dodd's letter, enclosing a copy of his father's to her. Mrs. Dodd here reminded him that his visits had been encouraged only upon a misapprehension of his father's sentiments; for which misapprehension he was in some degree to blame: not that she meant to reproach him on that score, especially at this unhappy moment: no, she rather blamed herself for listening to the sanguine voice of youth; but the error must now be repaired. She and Julia would always wish him well, and esteem him, provided he made no further attempt to compromise a young lady who could not be his wife. The note concluded thus:—

Individually I think I have some right to count on your honorable feeling to hold no communication with my daughter, and not in any way to attract her attention, under the present circumstances.

I am,

Dear Mr. Alfred Hardie,

With many regrets at the pain I fear

I am giving you,

Your sincere friend and well-wisher,

LUCY DODD.

Alfred on reading this letter literally staggered: but proud and sensitive, as well as loving, he manned him-

self to hide his wound from Sarah, whose black eyes were bent on him in merciless scrutiny. He said doggedly, though tremulously, "Very well!" then turned quickly on his heel, and went slowly home. Mrs. Dodd, with well-feigned indifference, questioned Sarah privately: the girl's account of the abrupt way in which he had received the missive added to her anxiety. She warned the servants that no one was at home to Mr. Alfred Hardie.

Two days elapsed, and then she received a letter from him. Poor fellow, it was the eleventh. He had written and torn up ten.

DEAR MRS. DODD, — I have gained some victories in my life; but not one without two defeats to begin with; how then can I expect to obtain such a prize as dear Julia without a check or two? You need not fear that I shall intrude after your appeal to me as a gentleman; but I am not going to give in because my father has written a hasty letter from Yorkshire. He and I must have many a talk face to face before I consent to be miserable for life. Dear Mrs. Dodd, at first receipt of your cruel letter, so kindly worded, I was broken-hearted; but now I am myself again: difficulties are made for ladies to yield to, and for men to conquer. Only for pity's sake do not you be my enemy: do not set her against me for my father's fault. Think, if you can, how my heart bleeds at closing this letter without one word to her I love, better, a thousand times better, than my life.

I am,

Dear Mrs. Dodd,

Yours sorrowfully,

but not despairing,

ALFRED HARDIE.

Mrs. Dodd kept this letter to herself. She could not read it quite unmoved, and therefore she felt sure it would disturb her daughter's heart the more.

Alfred had now a soft but dangerous antagonist in

Mrs. Dodd. All the mother was in arms to secure her daughter's happiness, *coûte que coûte!* and the surest course seemed to be to detach her affections from Alfred. What hope of a peaceful heart without this? and what real happiness without peace? But, too wise and calm to interfere blindly, she watched her daughter day and night, to find whether love or pride was the stronger: and this is what she observed:—

Julia never mentioned Alfred. She sought occupation eagerly: came oftener than usual for money, saying it was for "luxury." She visited the poor more constantly, taking one of the maids with her, at Mrs. Dodd's request. She studied logic with Edward. She went to bed rather early, fatigued, it would appear, by her activity: and she gave the clew to her own conduct one day: "Mamma," said she, "nobody is downright unhappy who is good."

Mrs. Dodd noticed also a certain wildness and almost violence, with which she threw herself into her occupations: and a worn look about the eyes that told of a hidden conflict. On the whole Mrs. Dodd was hopeful; for she had never imagined the cure would be speedy or easy. To see her child on the right road was much. Only the great healer Time could "medicine her to that sweet peace which once she owned;" and even time cannot give her back her childhood, thought the mother, with a sigh.

One day came an invitation to an evening party at a house where they always wound up with dancing. Mrs. Dodd was for declining as usual; for since that night Julia had shunned parties. "Give me the sorrows of the poor and afflicted," was her cry; "the gayety of the hollow world jars me more than I can bear." But now she caught with a sort of eagerness at this invitation. "Accept. They shall not say I am wearing the willow."

"My brave girl!" said Mrs. Dodd, joyfully, "I would not press it; but you are right; we owe it to ourselves to outface scandal. Still, let there be no precipitation; we must not undertake beyond our strength."

"Try me to-night," said Julia; "you don't know what I can do. I dare say *he* is not pining for *me*."

She was the life and soul of the party, and, indeed, so feverishly brilliant, that Mrs. Dodd said softly to her, "Gently, love; moderate your spirits, or they will deceive our friends as little as they do me."

Meantime, it cost Alfred Hardie a severe struggle to keep altogether aloof from Julia. In fact, it was a state of daily self-denial, to which he would never have committed himself, but that he was quite sure he could gradually win his father over. At his age we are apt to count without our antagonist.

Mr. Richard Hardie was "a long-headed man." He knew the consequence of giving one's reasons; eternal discussion ending in war. He had taken care not to give any to Mrs. Dodd, and he was as guarded and reserved with Alfred. The young man begged to know the why and the wherefore, and, being repulsed, employed all his art to elicit them by surprise, or get at them by inference: but all in vain; Hardie senior was impenetrable; and inquiry, petulance, tenderness, logic, were all shattered on him as the waves break on Ailsa Craig.

Thus began dissension, decently conducted at first, between a father, indulgent hitherto, and an affectionate son.

In this unfortunate collision of two strong and kindred natures, every advantage was at present on the father's side; age, experience, authority, resolution, hidden and powerful motives, to which my reader even has no clew as yet; a purpose immutable and concealed.

Add to these a colder nature and a far colder affection; for Alfred loved his father dearly.

At last, one day, the impetuous one lost his self-command, and said he was a son, not a slave, and had little respect for authority when afraid or ashamed to appeal to reason. Hardie senior turned on him with a gravity and dignity no man could wear more naturally. "Alfred, have I been an unkind father to you all these years?"

"Oh, no, father, no; I have said nothing that can be so construed. And that is the mystery to me; you are acting quite out of character."

"Have I been one of those interfering, pragmatical fathers who cannot let their children enjoy themselves their own way?"

"No, sir; you have never interfered, except to pay for anything I wanted."

"Then make the one return in your power, young man; have a little faith in such a father, and believe that he does not interfere now but for your good, and under a stern necessity; and that when he does interfere for once, and say, 'this thing shall not be,' it shall not be — by Heaven!"

Alfred was overpowered by the weight and solemnity of this. Sorrow, vexation, and despondency all rushed into his heart together, and unmanned him for a moment; he buried his face in his hands, and something very like a sob burst from his young heart. At this Hardie senior took up the newspaper with imperturbable coldness, and wore a slight curl of the lip. All this was hardly genuine, for he was not altogether unmoved; but he was a man of rare self-command, and chose to impress on Alfred that he was no more to be broken or melted than a mere rock.

It is always precarious to act a part; and this cynicism was rather able than wise; Alfred looked up and

watched him keenly as he read the monetary article with tranquil interest; and then, for the first time in his life, it flashed into the young man's mind that his father was not a father. "I never knew him till now," thought he. "This man is *ασιογγος*;"¹

Thus a gesture, so to speak, sowed the first seed of downright disunion in Richard Hardie's house — disunion, a fast-growing plant, when men set it in the soil of the passions.

Alfred, unlike Julia, had no panacea. Had any lips, except perhaps hers, told him that "to be good is to be happy here below," he would have replied, "*Negatur*; contradicted by daily experience." It never occurred to him, therefore, to go out of himself and sympathize with the sordid sorrows of the poor, and their bottomless egotism in contact with the well-to-do. He brooded on his own love, and his own unhappiness, and his own father's cruelty. His nights were sleepless, and his days leaden. He tried hard to read for his first class, but for once even ambition failed; it ended in flinging books away in despair. He wandered about dreaming and hoping for some change, and bitterly regretting his excessive delicacy, which had tied his own hands and brought him to a standstill. He lost his color and what little flesh he had to lose; for such young spirits as this are never plump. In a word, being now strait-jacketed into feminine inactivity, while void of feminine patience, his ardent heart was pining and fretting itself out. He was in this condition, when one day Peterson, his Oxonian friend, burst in on him open-mouthed with delight, and, as usual with bright spirits of this calibre, did not even notice his friend's sadness. "Cupid had clapped him on the shoulder," as Shakespeare hath it; and it was a deal nicer than the bum-bailiff rheumatism.

¹ Without bowels of affection.

“Oh, such a divine creature! Met her twice; you know her by sight; her name is Dodd. But I don’t care; it shall be Peterson; the rose by any other name, etc.” Then followed a rapturous description of the lady’s person, well worth omitting. “And such a jolly girl! brightens them all up wherever she goes; and such a dancer; did the cachouka with a little Spanish bloke Bosanquet has got hold of, and made his black bolus eyes twinkle like midnight cigars; danced it with castanets, and smiles, and such a what d’ye call ’em, my boy, you know; such a ‘go.’”

“You mean such an *abandon*,” groaned Alfred, turning sick at heart.

“That’s the word. Twice the spirit of Duvernay, and ten times the beauty. But just you hear her sing, that is all; Italian, French, German, English even.”

“Plaintive songs?”

“Oh, whatever they ask for. Make you laugh or make you cry — to order; never says no. Just smiles and sits down to the music-box. Only she won’t sing two running; they have to stick a duffer in between. I shall meet her again next week: will you come? Any friend of mine is welcome. Wish me joy, old fellow; I’m a gone coon.”

This news put Alfred in a frenzy of indignation and fear. Julia dancing the cachouka! Julia a jolly girl! Julia singing songs pathetic or merry, whichever were asked for! The heartless one! He called to mind all he had read in the classics, and elsewhere, about the fickleness of woman. But this impression did not last long; he recalled Julia’s character, and all the signs of a love tender and true she had given him; he read her by himself, and, lover-like, laid all the blame on another. It was all her cold-blooded mother. “Fool that I have been. I see it all now. She appeals to my delicacy to

keep away; then she goes to Julia and says, 'See, he deserts you at a word from his father. Be proud, be gay! He never loved you; marry another.' The shallow plotter forgets that whoever she does marry I'll kill. How many unsuspecting girls have these double-faced mothers deluded so? They do it in half the novels, especially in those written by women; and why? because these know the perfidy and mendacity of their sex better than we do; they see them nearer, and with their souls undressed. War, Mrs. Dodd, war to the death! From this moment I am alone in the world with her. I have no friend but Alfred Hardie; and my bitterest enemies are my cold-blooded father, and her cold-blooded mother."

The above sentences, of course, were never uttered. But they represent his thoughts accurately, though in a condensed form, and are, as it were, a miniature of this young heart boiling over.

From that moment he lay in wait for her, and hovered about the house day and night, determined to appeal to her personally, and undeceive her, and baffle her mother's treachery. But at this game he was soon detected; Mrs. Dodd lived on the watch now. Julia, dressed to go out, went to the window one afternoon to look at the weather; but retreated somewhat hastily and sat down on the sofa.

"You flutter, darling," said Mrs. Dodd. "Ah, he is there."

"Yes."

"You had better take off your things."

"Oh, yes. I tremble at the thoughts of meeting him. Mamma, he is changed, sadly changed. Poor, poor Alfred!" She went to her own room and prayed for him. She informed the Omniscient that, though much greater and better in other respects than she was, he had

not patience. She prayed, with tears, that he might have Christian patience granted him from on high.

“Heart of stone! she shuns me,” said Alfred outside. He had seen her in her bonnet.

Mrs. Dodd waited several days to see whether this annoyance would not die of itself; waiting was her plan in most things. Finding he was not to be tired out, she sent Sarah out to him with a note carefully sealed.

MR. ALFRED HARDIE, — Is it generous to confine my daughter to the house?

Yours regretfully,

LUCY DODD.

A line came back instantly in pencil.

MRS. DODD, — Is all the generosity and all the good faith to be on one side?

Yours in despair,

ALFRED HARDIE.

Mrs. Dodd colored faintly; the reproach pricked her, but did not move her. She sat quietly down that moment, and wrote to a friend in London, to look out for a furnished villa in a healthy part of the suburbs, with immediate possession. “Circumstances,” said she, “making it desirable we should leave Barkington immediately, and for some months.”

The Bosanquets gave a large party; Mrs. and Miss Dodd were there. The latter was playing a part in a charade to the admiration of all present, when in came Mr. Peterson, introducing his friend, Alfred Hardie.

Julia caught the name, and turned a look of alarm on her mother: but went on acting.

Presently she caught sight of him at some distance. He looked very pale, and his glittering eye was fixed on her with a sort of stern wonder.

Such a glance from fiery eyes, that had always dwelt tenderly on her till then, struck her like a weapon. She stopped short, and turned red and pale by turns. "There, that is nonsense enough," said she bitterly, and went and sat by Mrs. Dodd. The gentlemen thronged round her with compliments, and begged her to sing. She excused herself. Presently she heard an excited voice, towards which she dared not look; it was inquiring whether any lady could sing "Aileen Aroon." With every desire to gratify the young millionaire, nobody knew "Aileen Aroon," nor had ever heard of it.

"Oh, impossible!" cried Alfred. "Why, it is in praise of constancy, a virtue ladies shine in; at least, they take credit for it."

"Mamma," whispered Julia, terrified, "get me away, or there will be a scene. He is reckless."

"Be calm, love," said Mrs. Dodd, "there shall be none." She rose and glided up to Alfred Hardie, looked coldly in his face; then said with external politeness and veiled contempt, "I will attempt the song, sir, since you desire it." She waved her hand, and he followed her sulkily to the piano. She sang "Aileen Aroon," not with her daughter's eloquence, but with a purity and mellowness that charmed the room: they had never heard the genius sing it.

As spirits are said to overcome the man at whose behest they rise, so this sweet air, and the gush of reminiscence it awakened, overpowered him who had evoked them. Alfred put his hand unconsciously to his swelling heart, cast one look of anguish at Julia, and hurried away half choked. Nobody but Julia noticed.

A fellow in a rough great-coat and tattered white hat opened the fly door for Mrs. Dodd. As Julia followed her, he kissed her skirt unseen by Mrs. Dodd; but her

quick ears caught a heart-breaking sigh. She looked and recognized Alfred in that disguise; the penitent fit had succeeded to the angry one. Had Julia observed? To ascertain this without speaking of him, Mrs. Dodd waited till they had got some little distance, then quietly put out her hand and rested it for a moment on her daughter's; the girl was trembling violently. "Little wretch!" came to Mrs. Dodd's lips, but she did not utter it. They were near home before she spoke at all, and then she only said very kindly, "My love, you will not be subjected again to these trials;" a remark intended quietly to cover the last occurrence as well as Alfred's open persecution.

They had promised to go out the very next day; but Mrs. Dodd went alone, and made excuses for Miss Dodd. On her return she found Julia sitting up for her, and a letter come from her friend, describing a pleasant cottage, now vacant, near Maida Vale. Mrs. Dodd handed the open letter to Julia; she read it without comment.

"We will go up to-morrow and take it for three months. Then the Oxford vacation will terminate."

"Yes, mamma."

I am now about to relate a circumstance by no means without parallels, but almost impossible to account for; and, as nothing is more common and contemptible than inadequate solutions, I will offer none at all; but so it was, that Mrs. Dodd awoke in the middle of that very night in a mysterious state of mental tremor; trouble, veiled in obscurity, seemed to sit heavy on her bosom. So strong, though vague, was this new and mysterious oppression, that she started up in bed and cried aloud, "David!—Julia!—Oh, what is the matter?" The sound of her own voice dispelled the cloud in part, but not entirely. She lay awhile, and then finding herself

quite averse to sleep, rose and went to her window, and eyed the weather anxiously. It was a fine night; soft fleecy clouds drifted slowly across a silver moon. The sailor's wife was reassured on her husband's behalf. Her next desire was to look at Julia sleeping; she had no particular object; it was the instinctive impulse of an anxious mother whom something had terrified. She put on her slippers and dressing-gown, and, lighting a candle at her night-lamp, opened her door softly and stepped into the little corridor. But she had not taken two steps when she was arrested by a mysterious sound.

It came from Julia's room.

What was it?

Mrs. Dodd glided softly nearer and nearer, all her senses on the stretch.

The sound came again. It was a muffled sob.

The stifled sound, just audible in the dead stillness of the night, went through and through her who stood there listening aghast. Her bowels yearned over her child; and she hurried to the door, but recollected herself, and knocked very gently. "Don't be alarmed, love, it is only me. May I come in?" She did not wait for the answer, but turned the handle and entered. She found Julia sitting up in bed, looking wildly at her, with cheeks flushed and wet. She sat on the bed and clasped her to her breast in silence: but more than one warm tear ran down upon Julia's bare neck; the girl felt them drop, and her own gushed in a shower.

"Oh, what have I done?" she sobbed. "Am I to make you wretched, too?"

Mrs. Dodd did not immediately reply. She was there to console; and her admirable good-sense told her that to do that she must be calmer than her patient; so, even while she kissed and wept over Julia, she managed gradually to recover her composure. "Tell me, my child,"

said she, "why do you act a part with me? Why brave it out under my eye, and spend the night secretly in tears? Are you still afraid to trust me?"

"Oh, no, no! but I thought I was so strong, so proud: I undertook miracles. I soon found my pride was a mole-hill, and my love a mountain. I could not hold out by day if I did not ease my breaking heart at night. How unfortunate! I kept my head under the bed-clothes, too; but you have such ears. I thought I would stifle my grief, or else perhaps you would be as wretched as I am: forgive me! pray, forgive me!"

"On one condition," said Mrs. Dodd, struggling with the emotion these simple words caused her. — "Anything to be forgiven," cried Julia, impetuously. "I'll go to London. I'll go to Botany Bay. I deserve to be hanged."

"Then, from this hour, no half-confidences between us. Dear me, you carry in your own bosom a much harsher judge, a much less indulgent friend, than I am. Come! trust me with your heart. Do you love him very much? Does your happiness depend on him?"

At this point-blank question, Julia put her head over Mrs. Dodd's shoulder, not to be seen; and, clasping her tight, murmured scarce above a whisper, "I don't know how much I love him. When he came in at that party I felt his slave; his unfaithful adoring slave; if he had ordered me to sing 'Aileen Aroon,' I should have obeyed; if he had commanded me take his hand and leave the room, I think I should have obeyed. His face is always before me as plain as life; it used to come to me bright and loving; now it is pale and stern and sad; I was not so wretched till I saw he was pining for me, and thinks me inconstant. O mamma! so pale! so shrunk! so reckless! He was sorry for misbehaving that night: he changed clothes with a beggar to kiss my dress: poor

thing! poor thing! Who ever loved as he does me? I am dying for him; I am dying."

"There! there!" said Mrs. Dodd, soothingly. "You have said enough. This must be love. I am on your Alfred's side from this hour."

Julia opened her eyes, and was a good deal agitated as well as surprised. "Pray do not raise my hopes," she gasped. "We are parted forever. His father refuses. Even you seemed averse; or have I been dreaming?"

"Me, dearest? How can I be averse to anything lawful, on which I find your heart is really set, and your happiness at stake? Of course I have stopped the actual intercourse, under existing circumstances; but these circumstances are not unalterable: your only obstacle is Mr. Richard Hardie."

"But what an obstacle!" sighed Julia. "His father! a man of iron! so everybody says; for I have made inquiries — oh!" And she was abashed. She resumed, hastily, "And that letter, so cold, so cruel! I feel it was written by one not open to gentle influences. He does not think me worthy of his son; so accomplished, so distinguished, at the very university where our poor Edward — has — you know" —

"Little simpleton!" said Mrs. Dodd, and kissed her tenderly; "your iron man is the commonest clay; sordid; pliable; and your stern heroic Brutus is a shop-keeper; he is open to the gentle influences which sway the kindred souls of the men you and I buy our shoes, our tea, our gloves, our fish-kettles, of: and these influences I think I command, and am prepared to use them to the utmost."

Julia lay silent, and wondering what she could mean.

But Mrs. Dodd hesitated now; it pained and revolted her to show her enthusiastic girl the world as it is. She said as much, and added, "I seem to be going to aid all

these people to take the bloom from my own child's innocence. Heaven help me!"

"Oh, never mind that," cried Julia, in her ardent way; "give me truth before error, however pleasing."

Mrs. Dodd replied only by a sigh: grand general sentiments like that, never penetrated her mind: they glided off like water from a duck's back. "We will begin with this mercantile Brutus, then," said she, with such a curl of the lip. Brutus had rejected her daughter.

"Mr. Richard Hardie was born and bred in a bank; one where no wild thyme blows, my poor enthusiast; nor cowslips nor the nodding violet grows; but gold and silver chink, and things are discounted, and men grow rich, slowly but surely, by lawful use of other people's money. Breathed upon by these 'gentle influences,' he was, from his youth, a remarkable man; measured by trade's standard. At five and twenty, divine what he did! He saved the bank. You have read of bubbles; the Mississippi Bubble and the South Sea Bubble. Well, in the year 1825, it was not one bubble, but a thousand; mines by the score, and in distant lands; companies by the hundred; loans to every nation or tribe; down to Guatemala, Patagonia, and Greece; two hundred new ships were laid on the stocks in one year, for your dear papa told me; in short, a fever of speculation, and the whole nation raging with it: my dear, princes, dukes, duchesses, bishops, poets, lawyers, physicians, were seen struggling with their own footmen for a place in the Exchange: and, at last, good, steady old Mr. Hardie, Alfred's grandfather, was drawn into the vortex. Now, to excuse him and appreciate the precocious Richard, you must try and realize that these bubbles, when they rise, are as alluring and reasonable, as they are ridiculous and incredible when one looks back on them; even soap-bubbles, you know, have rainbow hues till they burst:

and, indeed, the blind avarice of men does but resemble the blind vanity of women: look at our grandmothers' hoops, and our mothers' short waists and monstrous heads. Yet in their day what woman did not glory in these insanities? Well then, Mr. Richard Hardie, at twenty-five, was the one to foresee the end of all these bubbles; he came down from London and brought his people to their senses by sober reason, and 'sound commercial principles;' that means, I believe, 'Get other people's money, but do not risk your own.' His superiority was so clear, that his father resigned the helm to him, and, thanks to his ability, the bank weathered the storm, while all the other ones in the town broke or suspended their trade. Now, you know, youth is naturally ardent and speculative: but Richard Hardie's was colder and wiser than other people's old age: and that is one trait. Some years later, in the height of his prosperity, — I reveal this only for your comfort, and on your sacred promise, as a person of delicacy, never to repeat it to a soul, — Richard Hardie was a suitor for my hand."

"Mamma!"

"Do not ejaculate, sweetest. It discomposes me. 'Nothing is extraordinary,' as that good creature, Dr. Sampson, says. He must have thought it would *answer*, in one way or another, to have a gentlewoman at the head of his table; and I was not penniless, *bien entendu*. Failing in this, he found a plain little thing, with a gloomy temper and no accomplishments nor graces; but her father could settle twenty thousand pounds. He married her directly: and that is a trait. He sold his father's and grandfather's house and place of business, in spite of all their associations, and obtained a lease of his present place from my uncle Fountain: it seemed a more money-making situation. A trait. He gives me no reason for rejecting my daughter. Why? because he

is not proud of his reasons: this walking avarice has intelligence: a trait. Now put all this together, and who more transparent than the profound Mr. Hardie? He has declined our alliance because he takes for granted we are poor. When I undeceive him on that head, he will reopen *negotiations* in a letter; No. 2 of the correspondence; copied by one of his clerks: it will be calm, plausible, flattering: in short, it will be done like a gentleman, though he is nothing of the kind. And this brings me to what I ought to have begun with; your dear father and I have always lived within our income for our children's sake; he is bringing home the bulk of our savings this very voyage, and it amounts to fourteen thousand pounds."

"Oh, what an enormous sum!"

"No, dearest, it is not a fortune in itself. But it is a considerable sum to possess, independent of one's settlement and one's income. It is loose cash, to speak *à la* Hardie; that means, I can do what I choose with it; and of course I choose — to make you happy. How I shall work on what you call iron, and I venture to call clay, must be guided by circumstances. I think of depositing three or four thousand pounds every month with Mr. Hardie; he is our banker, you know. He will most likely open his eyes, and make some move before the whole sum is in his hands. If he does not, I shall perhaps call at his bank, and draw a check for fourteen thousand pounds. The wealthiest provincial banker does not keep such a sum floating in his shop-tills. His commercial honor, the one semi-chivalrous sentiment in his soul, would be in peril. He would yield, and with grace: none the less readily that his house and his bank, which have been long heavily mortgaged to our trustees, were made virtually theirs by agreement yesterday (I set this on foot within twelve hours of Mr. Iron's

impertinent letter), and he will say to himself, 'She can — post me, I think these people call it — this afternoon for not cashing her check, and she can turn me and my bank into the street to-morrow : ' and then, of course, he shall see by my manner the velvet paw is offered as well as the claw. He is pretty sure to ask himself which will suit the *ledger* best — this cat's friendship and her fourteen thousand pounds or — an insulted mother's enmity ? ' And Mrs. Placid's teeth made a little click just audible in the silent night.

"O mamma! my heart is sick. Am I to be bought and sold like this?"

Mrs. Dodd sighed; but said calmly, "You must pay the penalty for loving a parvenu's son. Come, Julia, no peevishness, no more romance, no more vacillation. You have tried pride, and failed pitifully; now I insist on your trying love! Child, it is the bane of our sex to carry nothing out: from that weakness I will preserve you. And, by-the-by, we are not going to marry Mr. Richard Hardie, but Mr. Alfred. Now, Mr. Alfred, with all his faults and defects" —

"Mamma! what faults? what defects?"

"—Is a gentleman; thanks to Oxford and Harrow and nature. My darling, pray to Heaven night and day for your dear father's safe return; for on him, and him alone, your happiness depends: as mine does."

"Mamma," cried Julia, embracing her, "what do poor girls do who have lost their mother?"

"Look abroad and see," was the grave reply.

Mrs. Dodd then begged her to go to sleep, like a good child, for her health's sake: all would be well; and with this was about to return to her own room, but a white hand and arm darted out of the bed and caught her. "What! Hope has come to me by night in the form of an angel, and shall I let her go back to her own room?"

Never, never, never, never, never!" And she patted the bed expressively, and with the prettiest impatience.

"Well, let Hope take off her earrings first," suggested Mrs. Dodd.

"No, no; come here directly, earrings and all."

"No, thank you: or I shall have *them* wounding you next."

Mrs. Hope quietly removed her earrings, and the tender pair passed the rest of the night in one another's arms. The young girl's tears were dried, and hope revived, and life bloomed again: only henceforth her longing eyes looked out to sea for her father, homeward bound.

Next day, as they were seated together in the drawing-room, Julia came from the window with a rush, and kneeled at Mrs. Dodd's knees, with bright, imploring face upturned.

"He is there, and—I am to speak to him? Is that it?"

"Dear, dear, dear mamma!" was the somewhat oblique reply.

"Well, then, bring me my things."

She was ten minutes putting them on; Julia tried to expedite her, and retarded her. She had her pace, and could not go beyond it.

Now by this time Alfred Hardie was thoroughly miserable. Unable to move his father, shunned by Julia, sickened by what he had heard, and indeed seen, of her gayety and indifference to their separation, stung by jealousy, and fretted by impatience, he was drinking nearly all the bitters of that sweet passion, love. But, as you are aware, he ascribed Julia's inconstancy, lightness, and cruelty, all to Mrs. Dodd. He hated her cordially, and dreaded her into the bargain; he played the sentinel about her door all the more because she had

asked him not to do it. "Always do what your enemy particularly objects to," said he, applying to his own case the wisdom of a Greek philosopher, one of his teachers.

So, when the gate suddenly opened, and instead of Julia, this very Mrs. Dodd walked towards him, his feelings were anything but enviable. He wished himself away heartily, but was too proud to retreat. He stood his ground. She came up to him; a charming smile broke out over her features. "Ah, Mr. Hardie," said she, "if you have nothing better to do, will you give me a minute?" He assented with surprise and an ill grace.

"May I take your arm?"

He offered it with a worse.

She laid her hand lightly on it, and it shuddered at her touch. He felt like walking with a velvet tigris.

By some instinct she divined his sentiments, and found her task more difficult than she had thought; she took some steps in silence. At last, as he was no dissembler, he burst out passionately, "Why are you my enemy?"

"I am not your enemy," said she quietly.

"Not openly, but all the more dangerous. You keep us apart, you bid her be gay, and forget me; you are a cruel, hard-hearted lady."

"No, I am not, sir," said Mrs. Dodd, simply.

"Oh! I believe you are good and kind to all the rest of the world, but you know you have a heart of iron for me."

"I am my daughter's friend, but not your enemy: it is you who are too inexperienced to know how delicate, how difficult, my duties are. It is only since last night I see my way clear; and look, I come at once to you with friendly intentions. Suppose I were as impetuous as you are! I should, perhaps, be calling you ungrateful."

He retorted bitterly: "Give me something to be grateful for, and you shall see whether that baseness is in my nature."

"I have a great mind to put you to the proof," said she archly. "Let us walk down this lane; then you can be as unjust to me *as you think proper*, without attracting public attention."

In the lane she told him quietly she knew the nature of his father's objections to the alliance he had so much at heart, and they were objections which her husband, on his return, would remove. On this he changed his tone a little, and implored her piteously not to deceive him.

"I will not," said she, "upon my honor. If you are as constant as my daughter is in her esteem for you, — notwithstanding her threadbare gayety worn over loyal regret, and to check a parcel of idle ladies' tongues, — you have nothing to fear from me, and everything to expect. Come, *Alfred*, — may I take that liberty with you? — let us understand one another. We only want that, to be friends."

This was hard to resist; and at his age. His lip trembled, he hesitated, but at last gave her his hand. She walked two hours with him, and laid herself out to enlighten, soothe, and comfort his sore heart. His hopes and happiness revived under her magic, as *Julia's* had. In the midst of it all, the wise woman quietly made terms. He was not to come to the house but on her invitation, unless indeed he had news of the *Agra* to communicate; but he might write once a week to her, and enclose a few lines to *Julia*. On this concession, he proceeded to mumble her white wrist, and call her his best, dearest, loveliest friend: his mother. "Oh, remember," said he, with a relic of distrust, "you are the only mother I can ever hope to have."

That touched her. Hitherto, he had been to her but a thing her daughter loved.

Her eyes filled. "My poor, warm-hearted, motherless boy," she said, "pray for my husband's safe return. For on that your happiness depends, and hers, and mine."

So now two more bright eyes looked longingly seaward for the Agra homeward bound.

CHAPTER VII.

NORTH latitude $23\frac{1}{2}$, longitude east 113; the time March of this same year; the wind southerly; the port Whampoa, in the Canton River. Ships at anchor reared their tall masts here and there; and the broad stream was enlivened and colored by junks and boats of all sizes and vivid hues, propelled on the screw principle by a great scull at the stern, with projecting handles for the crew to work; and at times a gorgeous mandarin boat, with two great glaring eyes set in the bows, came flying, rowed with forty paddles by an armed crew, whose shields hung on the gunwale and flashed fire in the sunbeams: the mandarin, in conical and buttoned hat, sitting on the top of his cabin calmly smoking paradise, *alias* opium, while his gong boomed and his boat flew fourteen miles an hour, and all things scuttled out of his celestial way. And there, looking majestically down on all these water ants, — the huge Agra, cynosure of so many loving eyes and loving hearts in England, lay at her moorings, homeward bound.

Her tea not being yet on board, the ship's hull floated high as a castle, and to the subtle, intellectual, doll-faced, bolus-eyed people, that sculled to and fro busy as bees, though looking forked mushrooms, she sounded like a vast musical shell; for a lusty harmony of many mellow voices vibrated in her great cavities, and made the air ring cheerily around her. The vocalists were the Cyclops, to judge by the tremendous thumps that kept clean time to their sturdy tune. Yet it was but human labor, so heavy and so knowing, that it had called in

music to help. It was the third mate and his gang completing his floor to receive the coming tea-chests. Yesterday he had stowed his dunnage, many hundred bundles of light, flexible canes from Sumatra and Malacca; on these he had laid tons of rough saltpetre, in two-hundred-pound gunny-bags, and was now mashing it to music, bags and all. His gang of fifteen, naked to the waist, stood in line, with huge wooden beetles called commanders, and lifted them high and brought them down on the nitre in cadence with true nautical power and unison, singing as follows, with a ponderous bump on the first note in each bar:—

Here goes one, Owe me there one;
 One now it is gone, There's another yet to
 come, And a-way we'll go to Flanders, A-
 mongst our wooden commanders, where we'll get wine in
 plenty, Rum, brandy, and Geneva.
 Here goes two. Owe me there two, &c.

And so up to fifteen, when the stave was concluded with a shrill "Spell, oh!" and the gang relieved, streaming with perspiration. When the saltpetre was well mashed, they rolled ton water-butts on it, till the floor was like a billiard-table. A fleet of chop-boats then

began to arrive, so many per day, with the tea-chests. Mr. Grey proceeded to lay the first tier on his saltpetre floor, and then built the chests, tier upon tier, beginning at the sides, and leaving in the middle a lane somewhat narrower than a tea-chest. Then he applied a screw-jack to the chests on both sides, and so enlarged his central aperture, and forced the remaining tea-chests in; and behold the enormous cargo packed as tight as ever shopkeeper packed a box — nineteen thousand eight hundred and six chests, sixty half chests, fifty quarter chests.

While Mr. Grey was contemplating his work with singular satisfaction, a small boat from Canton came alongside, and Mr. Tickell, midshipman, ran up the side, skipped on the quarter-deck, saluted it first, and then the first mate; and gave him a line from the captain, desiring him to take the ship down to Second Bar, for her water, at the turn of the tide.

Two hours after receipt of this order the ship swung to the ebb. Instantly Mr. Sharpe unmoored, and the *Agra* began her famous voyage, with her head at right angles to her course; for the wind being foul, all Sharpe could do was to set his topsails, driver, and jib, and keep her in the tide way, and clear of the numerous craft, by backing or filling as the case required; which he did with considerable dexterity, making the sails steer the helm for the nonce. He crossed the bar at sunset, and brought to with the best bower anchor in five fathoms and a half. Here they began to take in their water, and on the fifth day the six-oared gig was ordered up to Canton for the captain. The next afternoon he passed the ship in her, going down the river to Lin-Tin, to board the Chinese admiral for his chop, or permission to leave China. All night the *Agra* showed three lights at her mizzen-peak for him, and kept a sharp lookout.

But he did not come; he was having a very serious talk with the Chinese admiral. At daybreak, however, the gig was reported in sight; Sharpe told one of the midshipmen to call the boatswain and man the side. Soon the gig ran alongside; two of the ship's boys jumped like monkeys over the bulwarks, lighting, one on the main channels, the other on the midship port, and put the side ropes assiduously in the captain's hands; he bestowed a slight paternal smile on them, the first the imps had ever received from an officer, and went lightly up the sides. The moment his foot touched the deck, the boatswain gave a frightful shrill whistle; the men at the sides uncovered; the captain saluted the quarter-deck, and all the officers saluted him, which he returned, and stepping for a moment to the weather-side of his deck, gave the loud command, "All hands heave anchor." He then directed Mr. Sharpe to get what sail he could on the ship, the wind being now westerly, and dived into his cabin.

The boatswain piped three shrill pipes, and "All hands up anchor," was thrice repeated forward, followed by private admonitions, "Rouse and bitt!" "Show a leg!" etc., and up tumbled the crew with "homeward bound" written on their tanned faces.

(Pipe.) "Up all hammocks."

In ten minutes the ninety and odd hammocks were all stowed neatly in the netting, and covered with a snowy hammock cloth; and the hands were active, unbiting the cable, shipping the capstan bars, etc.

"All ready below, sir," cried a voice.

"Man the bars," returned Mr. Sharpe from the quarter-deck. "Play up, fifer. Heave away."

Out broke the merry fife with a rhythmical tune, and tramp, tramp, tramp went a hundred and twenty feet round and round; and, with brawny chests pressed tight

against the capstan-bars, sixty fine fellows walked the ship up to her anchor, drowning the fife at intervals with their sturdy song, as pat to their feet as an echo,—

Heave with a will, ye jolly boys,
Heave around;
We're off from Chainee, jolly boys,
Homeward bound.

“Short stay apeak, sir,” roars the boatswain from forward.

“Unship the bars. Way aloft. Loose sails. Let fall.”

The ship being now over her anchor, and the top-sails set, the capstan-bars were shipped again, the men all heaved with a will, the messenger grinned, the anchor was torn out of China with a mighty heave, and then run up with a luff tackle and secured, the ship's head cast to port.

“Up with the jib. Man the taupsle halliards. All hands make sail.” Round she came slow and majestically; the sails filled, and the good ship bore away for England.

She made the Bogue forts in three or four tacks, and there she had to come to again for another chop; China being a place as hard to get into as heaven, and to get out of as—chancery. At three P.M. she was at Macao, and hove-to four miles from the land to take in her passengers.

A gun was fired from the forecastle. No boats came off. Sharpe began to fret; for the wind, though light, had now got to the north-west, and they were wasting it. After awhile the captain came on deck, and ordered all the carronades to be scaled. The eight heavy reports bellowed the great ship's impatience across the water, and out pulled two boats with the passengers. While they were coming, Dodd sent and ordered the gunner to

load the carronades with shot, and secure and apron them. The first boat brought Colonel Kenealy, Mr. Fullalove, and a prodigious negro, who all mounted by the side-ropes. But the whip was rigged for the next boat, and the Honorable Mrs. Beresford and poodle hoisted on board. Item, her white maid; item, her black nurse; item, her little boy, and male Oriental in charge thereof, the strangest compound of dignity and servility and of black and white, being clad in snowy cotton and jappaned to the nine.

Mrs. Beresford was the wife of a Member of Council in India. She had been to Macao for her boy's health, intending to return to Calcutta; but meantime her husband was made a director, and went home, so she was going to join him. A tall, handsome lady, with too curved a nose.

Like most aquiline women, she was born to domineer a bit; and, for the last ten years, Orientals cringing at her knee, and Europeans flattering at her ear, had nursed this quality high, and spoiled her with all their might. A similar process had been applied to her boy Frederick from infancy. He was now nearly six. Arrogance and caprice shone so in both their sallow faces, and spoke so in every gesture, that, as they came on board, Sharpe, a reader of passengers, whispered the second mate, "Bayliss, we have shipped the devil."

"And a cargo of his imps," grunted Mr. Bayliss.

Mr. Fullalove was a Methodist parson — to the naked eye; grave, sober, lean, lank-haired. But some men are hidden fires. Fullalove was one of the extraordinary products of an extraordinary nation, the United States of America. He was an engineer for one thing, and an inventive and practical mechanic; held two patents of his own creating, which yielded him a good income both at home and in Great Britain. Such results are seldom

achieved without deep study and seclusion; and, accordingly, Joshua Fullalove, when the inventive fit was on, would be buried deep as Archimedes for a twelvemonth, burning the midnight oil. Then, his active element predominating, the pale student would dash into the forest or the prairie, with a rifle and an Indian, and come out bronzed, and more or less bepanthered or bebuffaloed; thence invariably to sea for a year or two; there, Anglo-Saxon to the backbone, his romance had ever an eye to business. He was always after foreign mechanical inventions, — he was now importing an excellent one from Japan, — and ready to do lucrative feats of knowledge. Thus he bought a Turkish ship at the bottom of the Dardanelles for twelve hundred dollars, raised her cargo (hardware), and sold it for six thousand dollars; then weighed the empty ship, pumped her, repaired her, and navigated her himself into Boston harbor, Massachusetts. On the way he rescued, with his late drowned ship, a Swedish vessel, and received salvage. He once fished eighty elephants' tusks out of a craft foundered in the Firth of Forth, to the disgust of elder Anglo-Saxons looking on from the shore. These unusual pursuits were varied by a singular recreation; he played at elevating the African character to European levels. With this view he had bought the Vespasian for eighteen hundred dollars; whereof anon. America is fertile in mixtures: what do we not owe her? Sherry-cobbler, gin-sling, cocktail, mint-julep, brandy-smash, sudden death, eye-openers. Well, one day she outdid herself, and mixed Fullalove: Quaker, Nimrod, Archimede, philanthropist, decorous Red Rover, and what not.

The passenger boats cast loose.

“All hands make sail!”

The boatswain piped, the light-heeled topsmen sped up the ratlines, and lay out on the yards, while all on deck

looked up, as usual, to see them work. Out bellied sail after sail aloft; the ship came courtesying round to the southward, spread her snowy pinions high and wide, and went like a bird over the wrinkled sea, homeward bound.

It was an exhilarating start, and all faces were bright — but one. The captain looked somewhat grave and thoughtful, and often scanned the horizon with his glass. He gave polite but very short answers to his friend Colonel Kenealy, who was firing nothings in his ear, and sent for the gunner.

While that personage, a crusty old Niler, called Monk, is cleaning himself to go on the quarter-deck, peep we into Captain Dodd's troubled mind, and into the circumstances which connect him with the heart of this story, despite the twelve thousand miles of water between him and the lovers at Barkington.

It had always been his pride to lay by money for his wife and children, and, under advice of an Indian friend, he had, during the last few years, placed considerable sums, at intervals, in a great Calcutta house, which gave eight per cent for deposits; swelled by fresh capital, and such high interest, the hoard grew fast. When his old ship, sore battered off the Cape, was condemned by the Company's agents at Canton, he sailed to Calcutta, intending to return thence to England as a passenger. But while he was at Calcutta the greatest firm there suspended payment, carrying astonishment and dismay into a hundred families. At such moments the press and the fireside ring for a little while the common-sense cry, "Good interest means bad security."¹ As for Dodd, who till then had revered all these great houses with nautical or childlike confidence, a blind terror took the place of blind trust in him. He felt guilty towards his children

¹ The Duke of Wellington (the iron one) is the author of this saying.

for risking their money (he had got to believe it was theirs, not his), and vowed, if he could only get hold of it once more, he would never trust a penny of it out of his own hands again, except, perhaps, to the Bank of England. But should he ever get it? It was a large sum. He went to Messrs. Anderson and Anderson, and drew for his fourteen thousand pounds. To his dismay, but hardly to his surprise, the clerks looked at one another, and sent the check into some inner department. Dodd was kept waiting. His heart sank within him; there was a hitch.

Meantime came a government officer, and paid in an enormous sum in notes and mercantile bills, principally the latter.

Presently Dodd was invited into the manager's room.

"Leaving the country, Captain Dodd?"

"Yes, sir."

"You had better take some of your money in bills at sight on London."

"I would rather have notes, sir," faltered Dodd.

"Oh! bills by Oliveira upon Baring are just as good, even without our indorsement. However, you can have half and half. Calcutta does but little in English bank-notes, you know."

They gave him his money. The bills were all manifestly good; but he recognized one of them as having just been paid in by the civilian. He found himself somehow safe in the street clutching the cash, with one half of his great paternal heart on fire, and the other half freezing. He had rescued his children's fortune, but he had seen destruction graze it. The natural chill at being scraped by peril soon passed, the triumphant glow remained. The next sentiment was precaution; he filled with it to the brim. He went and bought a great broad pocket-book with a key to it; though he was on

dry land, he covered it with oiled silk against the water, and sewed the whole thing to his flannel waistcoat, and felt for it with his hand a hundred times a day; the fruit of his own toil, his children's hoard, the rescued treasure he was to have the joy of bringing home safe to the dear partner of all his joys.

Unexpectedly he was ordered out to Canton to sail the *Agra* to the Cape. Then a novel and strange feeling came over him like a cloud; that feeling was a sense of personal danger; not that the many perils of the deep were new to him. He had faced them these five and twenty years, but till now they were little present to his imagination; they used to come, be encountered, be gone; but now, though absent, they darkened the way. It was the pocket-book, the material treasure, the hard cash, which had lately set him in a glow, seemed now to load his chest and hang heavy round the neck of his heart. Sailors are more or less superstitious; and men are creatures of habit, even in their courage. Now David had never gone to sea with a lot of money on him before. As he was a stout-hearted man, these vague forebodings would, perhaps, have cleared away with the bustle, when the *Agra* set her studding sails off Macao, but for a piece of positive intelligence he had picked up at Lin-Tin. The Chinese admiral had warned him of a pirate, a daring pirate, who had been lately cruising in these waters; first heard of south the line; but had since taken a Russian ship at the very mouth of the Canton River, murdered the crew in sight of land, and sold the women for slaves or worse. Dodd asked for particulars. Was he a Ladroneer, a Malay, a Bornese? In what latitude was he to be looked for? The admiral on this examined his memoranda. By these it appeared little was known as yet about the miscreant, except that he never cruised long on one ground; the crew was a mixed one; the

captain was believed to be a Portuguese, and to have a consort commanded by his brother; but this was doubtful, at all events the pair had never been seen at work together.

The gunner arrived and saluted the quarter-deck; the captain on this saluted him, and beckoned him to the weather side. On this the other officers kept religiously to leeward.

"Mr. Monk," said Dodd, "you will clean and prepare all the small arms directly."

"Ay, ay, sir!" said the old Niler, with a gleam of satisfaction.

"How many of your deck guns are serviceable?"

This simple question stirred up in one moment all the bile in the poor old gentleman's nature.

"My deck guns serviceable! How the — *can* they, when that son of a sea cook, your third mate, has been and lashed the water butts to their breechings, and jammed his gear in between their nozzles, till they can't breathe, poor things, far less bark? I wish *he* was lashed between the devil's hind-hocks, with a red-hot cable, as tight as he has jammed my guns."

"Be so good as not to swear, Mr. Monk," said Dodd. "At your age, sir, I look to you to set an example to the petty officers."

"Well, I won't swear no more, sir; d——d if I do!" He added very loudly and with a seeming access of ire, "And I ax your pardon, captain, and the deck's."

When a man has a deep anxiety, some human midge or mosquito buzzes at him. It is a rule. To Dodd, heavy with responsibility, and a dark misgiving he must not communicate, came delicately, and by degrees, and with a semigenuflexion every three steps, one like a magpie; and, putting his hands together, as our children do to approach the Almighty, delivered himself thus, in

modulated tones, and good Hindostanee: "The Daughter of Light, in whose beams I, Ramgolam, bask, glows with an amicable desire to see the lord commander of the ship resembling a mountain, and to make a communication."

Taught by sad experience how weighty are the communications the daughters of light pour into nautical commanders at sea, Dodd hailed Mr. Tickell, a midshipman, and sent him down to the lady's cabin. Mr. Tickell soon came back reddish, but grinning, to say that nothing less than the captain would do.

Dodd sighed, and dismissed Monk, with a promise to inspect the gun-deck himself; then went down to Mrs. Beresford and found her indignant. Why had he stopped the ship miles and miles from Macao, and given her the trouble and annoyance of a voyage in that nasty little boat?—Dodd opened his great brown eyes. "Why, madam, it is shoal water off Macao; we dare not come in."

"No evasion, sir. What have I to do with your shoal water? it was laziness, and want of consideration for a lady who has rented half your ship."

"Nothing of the kind, madam, I assure you."

"Are you the person they call Gentleman Dodd?"

"Yes."

"Then don't contradict a lady! or I shall take the liberty to dispute your title."

Dodd took no notice of this, and, with a patience few nautical commanders would have shown, endeavored to make her see that he was obliged to give Macao shoals a wide berth, or cast away the ship. She would not see it. When Dodd saw she wanted, not an explanation, but a grievance, he ceased to thwart her. "I am neglecting my duties to no purpose," said he, and left her without ceremony. This was a fresh offence; and, as

he went out, she declared open war. And she made it, too, from that hour: a war of pins and needles.

Dodd went on the gun-deck, and found that the defence of the ship had, as usual in these peaceful days, been sacrificed to the cargo. Out of twenty eighteen-pounders she carried on that deck, he cleared three, and that with difficulty. To clear any more he must have sacrificed either merchandise or water; and he was not the man to do either on the mere chance of a danger so unusual as an encounter with a pirate. He was a merchant captain, not a warrior.

Meantime, the *Agra* had already shown him great sailing qualities; the log was hove at sundown and gave eleven knots; so that with a good breeze abaft, few fore-and-aft-rigged pirates could overhaul her. And this wind carried her swiftly past one nest of them, at all events, the *Ladrone* isles. At nine P.M. all the lights were ordered out. Mrs. Beresford had brought a novel on board, and refused to comply: the master-at-arms insisted; she threatened him with the vengeance of the Company, the premier, and the nobility and gentry of the British realm. The master-at-arms, finding he had no chance in argument, doused the glim—pitiable resource of a weak disputant—then basely fled the rhetorical consequences.

The northerly breeze died out, and light, variable winds baffled the ship. It was the 6th April ere she passed the *Macclesfield* Bank in latitude 16. And now they sailed for many days out of sight of land. Dodd's chest expanded; his main anxiety at this part of the voyage lay in the state cabin; of all the perils of the sea, none shakes a sailor like fire. He set a watch day and night on that spoiled child.

On the 1st May they passed the great *Nantuna*, and got among the *Bornese* and *Malay* Islands: at which the

captain's glass began to sweep the horizon again: and night and day at the dizzy foretop gallant masthead he perched an eye.

They crossed the line in longitude 107, with a slight breeze, but soon fell into the doldrums. A dead calm, and nothing to do but kill time. Dodd had put down Neptune: that old blackguard could no longer row out on the ship's port side and board her on the starboard, pretending to come from ocean's depths, and shave the novices with a rusty hoop, and dab a soapy brush in their mouths. But champagne popped, the sexes flirted, and the sailors spun fathomless yarns, and danced rattling hornpipes, fiddled to by the grave Fullalove. "If there is a thing I *can* dew, it's fiddle," said he. He and his friend, as he systematically called Vespasian, taught the crew Yankee steps, and were beloved. One honest saltatory British tar offered that Western pair his grog for a week. Even Mrs. Beresford emerged, and walked the deck, quenching her austere regards with a familiar smile on Colonel Kenealy, her escort; this gallant good-natured soldier flattered her to the nine; and, finding her sweeten with his treacle, tried to reconcile her to his old friend Dodd. Straight she soured, and forbade the topic imperiously.

By this time the mates and midshipmen of the Agra had fathomed their captain. Mr. Tickell delivered the mind of the united midshipmen when he proposed Dodd's health in their mess-room, "as a navigator, a mathematician, a seaman, a gentleman, and a brick, with 3 times 3."

Dodd never spoke to his officers like a ruffian, nor yet palavered them; but he had a very pleasant way of conveying appreciation of an officer's zeal, by a knowing nod with a kindly smile on the heels of it. As for the men, they seldom come in contact with the captain of a

well-officered ship: this crew only knew him at first as a good-tempered soul, who didn't bother about nothing. But one day, as they lay becalmed south of the line, a jolly foretopman came on the quarter-deck with a fid of soup, and saluting and scraping, first to the deck, then to the captain, asked him if he would taste that.

"Yes, my man. Smoked!"

"Like — and blazes, your honor, axing your pardon, and the deck's."

"Young gentleman," said Dodd to Mr. Meredith, a midshipman, "be so good as to send the cook aft."

The cook came, and received, not an oath nor a threat, but a remonstrance and a grim warning.

In the teeth of this he burned the soup horribly the very next day. The crew sent the lucky foretopman aft again. He made his scrape and presented his fid. The captain tasted the soup, and sent Mr. Grey to bid the boatswain's mate pipe the hands on deck and bring the cook aft.

"Quartermaster, unsling a fire-bucket, and fill it from the men's kids. Mr. Tickell, see the cook swallow his own mess. Bosen's mate, take a bight of the flying jib sheet, stand over him, and start him if he dallies with it." With this the captain went below; and the cook, supping at the bucket, delivered himself as follows: "Well, ye lubbers, it is first-rate. *There's* no burn in it. It goes down like oil. Curse your ladylike stomachs; you ain't fit for a ship; why don't ye go ashore and man a gingerbread coach, and feed off French frogs and Italian baccy-pipe stems? (Whack.) What the — is that for?"

Boatswain's mate. Sup more, and jaw less.

"Well, I am supping as fast as I can. (Whack, whack.) Bloody end to ye, what are ye about? (Whack, whack, whack.) O Joe, Lord bless you, I *can't* eat any

more of it. (Whack.) I'll give you my grog for a week, only to let me fling the — stuff over the side. (Whack, whack, whack.) Oh, good, kind, dear Mr. Tickell, do go down to the captain for me." (Whack, whack.)

"Avast!" cried the captain reappearing; and the uplifted rope fell harmless.

"Silence, fore and aft!"

(Pipe.)

"The cook has received a light punishment this time, for spoiling the men's mess. My crew shall eat nothing I can't eat myself. My care is heavier than theirs is; but not my work, nor my danger in time of danger. Mind that, or you'll find I can be as severe as any master afloat. Purser."

"Sir."

"Double the men's grog; they have been cheated of their meal."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"And stop the cook's and his mate's for a week."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Bosen, pipe down."

"Shipmates, listen to me," said the foretopman
"This old Agra is a d—d com-for-table ship."

The oracular sentence was hailed with a ringing cheer. Still, it is unlucky the British seaman is so enamoured of theological terms, for he constantly misapplies them.

After lying a week like a dead log on the calm but heaving waters, came a few light puffs in the upper air and inflated the topsails only; the ship crawled southward, the crew whistling for wind.

At last, one afternoon, it began to rain, and after the rain came a gale from the eastward. The watchful skipper saw it purple the water to windward, and ordered the topsails to be reefed and the lee ports

closed. This last order seemed an excess of precaution; but Dodd was not yet thoroughly acquainted with his ship's qualities; and the hard cash round his neck made him cautious. The lee ports were closed, all but one, and that was lowered. Mr. Grey was working a problem in his cabin, and wanted a little light and a little air, so he just drooped his port; but, not to deviate from the spirit of his captain's instructions, he fastened a tackle to it, that he might have mechanical force to close it with should the ship lie over.

Down came the gale with a whoo, and made all crack. The ship lay over pretty much, and the sea poured in at Mr. Grey's port. He applied his purchase to close it. But though his tackle gave him the force of a dozen hands, he might as well have tried to move a mountain; on the contrary, the tremendous sea rushed in and burst the port wide open. Grey, after a vain struggle with its might, shrieked for help; down tumbled the nearest hands, and hauled on the tackle in vain. Destruction was rushing on the ship, and on them first. But, meantime, the captain, with a shrewd guess at the general nature of the danger he could not see, had roared out, "Slack the main sheet!" The ship righted, and the port came flying to, and terror-stricken men breathed hard, up to their waists in water and floating boxes. Grey barred the unlucky port, and went aft, drenched in body, and wretched in mind, to report his own fault. He found the captain looking grim as death. He told him, almost crying, what he had done, and how he had miscalculated the power of the water.

Dodd looked and saw his distress. "Let it be a lesson, sir," said he, sternly. "How many ships have been lost by this in fair weather, and not a man saved to tell how the craft was fooled away."

"Captain, bid me fling myself over the side, and I'll do it."

“Humph! I’m afraid I can’t afford to lose a good officer for a fault he — will — never — repeat.”

It blew hard all night, and till twelve the next day. The *Agra* showed her weak point: she rolled abominably. A dirty night came on. At eight bells, Mr. Grey, touched by Dodd’s clemency, and brimful of zeal, reported a light in Mrs. Beresford’s cabin. It had been put out as usual by the master-at-arms; but the refractory one had relighted it.

“Go and take it away,” said Dodd.

Soon screams were heard from the cabin. “Oh, mercy! mercy! I will not be drowned in the dark.”

Dodd, who had kept clear of her so long, went down and tried to reassure her.

“Oh, the tempest! the tempest!” she cried. “AND TO BE DROWNED IN THE DARK!”

“Tempest? It is blowing half a gale of wind, that is all.”

“Half a gale! Ah, that is the way you always talk to us ladies. Oh, pray give me my light, and send me a clergyman.”

Dodd took pity, and let her have her light, with a midshipman to watch it. He even made her a hypocritical promise that, should there be one grain of danger, he would lie to; but said he must not make a foul wind of a fair one for a few lee lurches. The *Agra* broke plenty of glass and crockery, though, with her fair wind and her lee lurches.

Wind down at noon next day, and a dead calm.

At two P.M. the weather cleared; the sun came out high in heaven’s centre; and a balmy breeze from the west.

At six twenty-five, the grand orb set calm and red, and the sea was gorgeous with miles and miles of great ruby dimples; it was the first glowing smile of southern lati-

tude. The night stole on so soft, so clear, so balmy, all were loath to close their eyes on it; the passengers lingered long on deck, watching the Great Bear dip, and the Southern Cross rise, and overhead a whole heaven of glorious stars most of us have never seen, and never shall see in this world. No belching smoke obscured, no plunging paddles deafened; all was musical; the soft air sighing among the sails; the phosphorescent water bubbling from the ship's bows; the murmurs from little knots of men on deck, subdued by the great calm; home seemed near, all danger far; peace ruled the sea, the sky, the heart; the ship, making a track of white fire on the deep, glided gently yet swiftly homeward, urged by snowy sails piled up like alabaster towers against a violet sky, out of which looked a thousand eyes of holy, tranquil fire. So melted the sweet night away.

Now carmine streaks tinged the eastern sky at the water's edge; and that water blushed; now the streaks turned orange, and the waves below them sparkled. Thence splashes of living gold flew and settled on the ship's white sails, the deck, and the faces; and with no more prologue, being so near the line, up came majestically a huge, fiery, golden sun, and set the sea flaming liquid topaz.

Instant the look-out at the foretop gallant masthead hailed the deck below. "Strange sail! Right ahead!"

The strange sail was reported to Captain Dodd, then dressing in his cabin. He came soon after on deck and hailed the look-out: "Which way is she standing?"

"Can't say, sir. Can't see her move any."

Dodd ordered the boatswain to pipe to breakfast; and taking his deck-glass went lightly up to the foretop gallant mast-crosstrees. Thence, through the light haze of a glorious morning, he espied a long low schooner, latine-rigged, lying close under Point Leat, a small island about

nine miles distant on the weather bow; and nearly in the Agra's course then approaching the Straits of Gasper, 4 latitude S.

"She is hove to," said Dodd, very gravely.

At eight o'clock, the stranger lay about two miles to windward, and still hove to.

By this time all eyes were turned upon her and half a dozen glasses. Everybody, except the captain, delivered an opinion. She was a Greek lying to for water: she was a Malay coming north with canes, and short of hands: she was a pirate watching the straits.

The captain leaned silent and sombre with his arms on the bulwarks, and watched the suspected craft.

Mr. Fullalove joined the group, and levelled a powerful glass of his own construction. His inspection was long and minute, and, while the glass was at his eye, Sharpe asked him, half in a whisper, could he make out anything?

"Wal," said he, "the varmint looks considerable snaky." Then, without moving his glass, he let drop a word at a time, as if the facts were trickling into his telescope at the lens, and out at the sight. "One — two — four — seven, false ports."

There was a momentary murmur among the officers all round. But British sailors are undemonstrative; Colonel Kenealy, strolling the deck with his cigar, saw they were watching another ship with maritime curiosity, and making comments; but he discerned no particular emotion nor anxiety in what they said, nor in the grave, low tones they said it in. Perhaps a brother seaman would though.

The next observation that trickled out of Fullalove's tube was this: "I judge there are too few hands on deck, and too many — white — eyeballs — glittering at the port-holes."

"Confound it!" muttered Bayliss, uneasily; "how can you see that?"

Fullalove replied only by quietly handing his glass to Dodd. The captain, thus appealed to, glued his eye to the tube.

"Well, sir; see the false ports, and the white eyebrows?" asked Sharpe, ironically.

"I see this is the best glass I ever looked through," said Dodd, doggedly, without interrupting his inspection.

"I think he is a Malay pirate," said Mr. Grey.

Sharpe took him up very quickly, and, indeed, angrily: "Nonsense. And if he is, he won't venture on a craft of this size."

"Says the whale to the swordfish," suggested Fullalove, with a little guttural laugh.

The captain, with the American glass at his eye, turned half round to the man at the wheel: "Starboard!"

"Starboard it is."

"Steer south south-east."

"Ay, ay, sir." And the ship's course was thus altered two points.

This order lowered Dodd fifty per cent in Mr. Sharpe's estimation. He held his tongue as long as he could: but at last his surprise and dissatisfaction burst out of him: "Won't that bring him out on us?"

"Very likely, sir," replied Dodd.

"Begging your pardon, captain, would it not be wiser to keep our course, and show the blackguard we don't fear him?"

"When we *do*? Sharpe, he has made up his mind an hour ago whether to lie still, or bite; my changing my course two points won't change his mind, but it may make him declare it; and *I* must know what he does intend, before I run the ship into the narrows ahead."

"Oh, I see," said Sharpe, half convinced.

The alteration in the Agra's course produced no move-

ment on the part of the mysterious schooner. She lay to under the land still, and with only a few hands on deck, while the *Agra* edged away from her and entered the straits between Long Island and Point Leat, leaving the schooner about two miles and a half distant to the north-west.

Ah! The stranger's deck swarms black with men.

His sham ports fell as if by magic, his guns grinned through the gaps like black teeth; his huge foresail rose and filled, and out he came in chase.

The breeze was a kiss from heaven, the sky a vaulted sapphire, the sea a million dimples of liquid, lucid gold.

CHAPTER VII.

AMONGST the curiosities of human reasoning is this : one forms a judgment on certain statements ; they turn out incorrect, yet the judgment sound.

This occurs oftenest when, to divine what any known person will do in a case stated, we go boldly by his character, his habits, or his interest : for these are great forces, towards which men gravitate through various and even contrary circumstances.

Now women, sitting at home out of detail's way, are somewhat forced, as well as naturally inclined, to rely on their insight into character ; and, by this broad clew, often pass through false or discolored data to a sound calculation.

Thus it was Mrs. Dodd applied her native sagacity to divine why Richard Hardie declined Julia for his son's wife, and how to make him withdraw that dissent : and the fair diviner was much mistaken in detail, but right in her conclusion ; for Richard Hardie *was* at that moment the unlikeliest man in Barkington to decline Julia Dodd — with Hard Cash in five figures — for his daughter-in-law.

I am now about to make a revelation to the reader, that will incidentally lead him to Mrs. Dodd's conclusion, but by a different path.

The outline she gave her daughter and my reader of Richard Hardie's cold and prudent youth was substantially correct ; but something had occurred since then, unknown to her, unknown to all Barkington. The centuries had blown a respectable bubble.

About two hundred and fifty years ago, some genius, as unknown as the inventor of the lathe, laid the first wooden tramroad, to enable a horse to draw forty-two hundredweight instead of seventeen. The coal-owners soon used it largely. In 1738, iron rails were invented: but prejudice, stronger than that metal, kept them down, and the wooden ones in vogue, for some thirty years. Then iron prevailed.

Meantime, a much greater invention had been creeping up to join the metal way; I mean the locomotive power of steam, whose history is not needed here. Enough that in 1804 took place as promising a wedding as civilization ever saw; for then an engine built by Trevethick, a great genius frittered for want of pluck, drew carriages laden with ten tons, five miles an hour on a Welsh railway. Next stout Stephenson came on the scene, and insisted on benefiting mankind in spite of themselves, and of shallow legislators, *à priori* reasoners, and a heavy review, whose political motto was *Stemus super antiquas vias*, which may be rendered, Better stand still on turnpikes than move on rails.

His torments and triumph are history.

Two of his repartees seem neat: — 1. To Lord Noodle, or Lord Doodle, which was it? objecting haughtily, "And suppose a cow should get in the way of your engine, sir?" he replied, "Why, then it would be bad — for the coow." The objector had overrated the obstructive power of his honored parent.

2. To the *à priori* reasoners, who sat in their studies and demonstrated with complete unanimity that uncogged wheels would revolve on a smooth rail, but leave the carriage *in statu quo*, he replied by building an engine with Lord Ravensworth's noble aid, hooking on eight carriages, and rattling off up an incline. "*Solvitur ambulando*," quoth Stephenson the stout-hearted, to Messrs. *À Priori*.

Next a coach ran on the Stockton and Darlington rail.

Next the Liverpool and Manchester line was projected. Oh, then what bitter opposition to the national benefactors, and the good of man!

Awake from the tomb echoes of dead Cant.

“The revolving wheels might move the engine on a rail, but what would that avail if they could not move them in the closet, and on a mathematical paper? Railways would be bad for canals, bad for morals, bad for highwaymen, bad for roadside inns: the smoke would kill the partridges (‘Aha! thou hast touched us nearly,’ said the country gentlemen), the travellers would go slowly to their destination, but swift to destruction.” And the Heavy Review, whose motto was “*Stemus super* turnpikes,” offered “to back old Father Thames against the Woolwich railway for any sum.” And Black Will, who drove the next heaviest ephemeral in the island, told a schoolboy, who now writes these pages, “There’s nothing can ever be safe at twenty miles an hour, without ’tis a bird in the air;” and confirmed it with an oath. Briefly, buzz! buzz! buzz!

Gray was crushed, Trevethick driven out of the country, stout Steevie thwarted, badgered, taunted, and even insulted, and bespattered with dirt, I might say with dung; since his opponents discharged their own brains at him by speech and writing. At last, when after the manner of men they had manured their benefactor well, they consented to reap him. Railways prevailed and increased, till, lo and behold! a prime minister with a spade delving one in the valley of the Trent. The tide turned; good working railways from city to city became an approved investment of genuine capital; notwithstanding the frightful frauds and extortion to which the projectors were exposed in a parliament which under a new

temptation showed itself as corrupt and greedy as any nation or age can parallel.

When this sober state of things had endured some time, there came a year that money was loose, and a speculative fever due in the whirligig of time. Then railways bubbled. New ones were advertised, fifty a month, and all went to a premium. High and low scrambled for the shares, even when the projected line was to run from the town of Nought to the village of Nothing across a goose common. The flame spread, fanned by prospectus and advertisement, two mines of glowing fiction, compared with which the legitimate article is a mere tissue of understatements: princes sat in railway tenders, and clove the air like the birds whose effigies surmount their armorials; our stiffest peers relaxed into boards; bishops warned their clergy against avarice, and buttered Hudson an inch thick for shares; and turned their little aprons into great pockets; men, stainless hitherto, put down their infants, nurses included, as independent subscribers, and bagged the coupons, *capturi tartaros*: nearly everything that had a name, and by some immense fortuity could write it, demanded its part in the new and fathomless source of wealth: a charwoman's two sons were living in a garret on fifteen shillings apiece per week; down went their excellencies' names for thirty-seven thousand pounds worth of bubbling iron; another shareholder applied imperiously from a house in Grosvenor Square; he had breakfasted on the steps. Once more, in Time's whirligig, gentlemen and their footmen jostled one another on the Exchange, and a motley crew of peers and printers, vicars and admirals, professors, cooks, costermongers, cotton-spinners, waiters, coachmen, priests, potboys, bankers, braziers, dairymen, mail-guards, barristers, spinsters, butchers, beggars, duchesses, rag-merchants — in one word, of nobs and snobs — fought and

scrambled pellmell for the popular paper; and all to get rich in a day.¹

Richard Hardie had some money in existing railways; but he declined to invest his hard cash upon hypotheticals. He was repeatedly solicited to be a director; but always declined. Once he was offered a canny bribe of a thousand pounds to let his name go on a provisional committee. He refused with a characteristic remark: "I never buy any merchandise at a fancy price, not even hard cash."

Antidote to the universal mania, Barkington had this one wet blanket: an unpopular institution; but far more salutary than a damp sheet, especially in time of bubble.

Nearly all his customers consulted Richard Hardie, and this was the substance of his replies: "The bubbles of history, including the great one of my youth, were national, as well as individual, follies. It is not so now: the railways, that ruin their allottees and directors, will be pure additions to the national property, and some day remove one barrier more from commerce. The Dutch tulip frenzy went on a petty fancy: the railway fury goes on a great fact. Our predecessors blew mere soap bubbles; we blow an iron bubble: but here the distinction ends; in 1825 the country undertook immediate engagements, to fulfil which a century's income would not have sufficed: to-day a thousand railway companies are registered, requiring a capital of six hundred millions, and another thousand projected, to cost another five hundred millions. Where is the money to come from? If the world was both cultivated and civilized (instead of neither), and this nation could be sold, with every building, ship, quadruped, jewel, and marketable female in it, it would not fetch the money to make these railways;

¹ For the humors of the time see the parliamentary return of *Railway Subscribers*, published 1846: Francis's *British Railway*: Evans's *Commercial Crisis*: and the pamphlets and journals of the day.

yet the country undertakes to create them in three years *with its floating capital*. Arithmetic of Bedlam! The thing cannot last a year without collapsing." Richard Hardie *talked* like this from first to last. But, when he saw that shares invariably mounted; that even those who, for want of interest, had to buy them at a premium, sold them at a profit; when he saw paupers making large fortunes in a few months, by buying into every venture and selling the next week; he itched for his share of the booty, and determined to profit in act by the credulity of mankind, as well as expose it in words. He made use of his large connections to purchase shares; which he took care to part with speedily; he cleared a good deal of money, and that made him hungrier: he went deeper and deeper into what he called Flat catching, till one day he stood to win thirty thousand pounds at a coup.

But it is dangerous to be a convert, real or false, to bubble: the game is to be rash at once, and turn prudent at the full tide. When Richard Hardie was up to his chin in these time bargains, came an incident not easy to foresee: the conductors of the *Times*, either from patriotism, or long-sighted policy, punctured the bladder, though they were making thousands weekly by the railway advertisements. The time was so well chosen, and the pin applied, that it was a death-blow: shares declined from that morning, and the inevitable panic was advanced a week or two. The more credulous speculators held on in hopes of a revival; but Hardie, who knew that the collapse had been merely hastened, saw the gravity of the situation, and sold largely at a heavy loss. But he could not sell all the bad paper he had accumulated for a temporary purpose: the panic came too swiftly, and too strong; soon there were no buyers at any price. The biter was bit: the fox who had said, "This is a trap; I'll

lightly come and lightly go," was caught by the light fantastic toe.

In this emergency he showed high qualities: vast financial ability, great fortitude, and that sense of commercial honor which Mrs. Dodd justly called his semi-chivalrous sentiment. He mustered all his private resources to meet his engagements, and maintain his high position. Then commenced a long and steady struggle, conducted with a Spartan dignity and self-command, and a countenance as close as wax. Little did any in Barkington guess the doubts and fears, the hopes and despondencies, which agitated and tore the heart and brain that schemed, and throbbed, and glowed, and sickened by turns, beneath that steady, modulated exterior. And so for months and months he secretly battled with insolvency; sometimes it threatened in the distance, sometimes at hand, but never caught him unawares: he provided for each coming danger, he encountered each immediate attack. But not unscathed in morals. Just as matters looked brighter, came a concentration of liabilities he could not meet without emptying his tills, and so incurring the most frightful danger of all. He had provided for its coming too; but a decline, greater than he had reckoned on, in the value of his good securities, made that provision inadequate. Then it was he committed a *faux-pas*. He was one of his own children's trustees, and the other two signed after him like machines. He said to himself, "My honor is my children's; my position is worth thousands *to them*. I have sacrificed a fortune to preserve it; it would be madness to recoil now." He borrowed three thousand pounds of the trust money, and, soon after, two thousand more: it kept him above water; but the peril and the escape on such terms left him gasping inwardly.

At last, when even his granite nature was almost worn

down with labor, anxiety, and struggling all alone without a word of comfort—for the price of one grain of sympathy would have been “Destruction”—he shuffled off his iron burden, and breathed again.

One day he spent in a sort of pleasing lethargy, like a strong swimmer who, long and sore buffeted by the waves, has reached the shore at last.

The next day his cashier, a sharp-visaged, bald-headed old man called young Skinner, invited his attention rather significantly to the high amount of certain balances compared with the cash at his (Skinner’s) disposal.

“Indeed!” said Hardie, quietly; “that must be regulated.” He added graciously, as if conferring a great favor, “I’ll look into the books myself, Skinner.”

He did more: he sat up all night over the books; and his heart died within him. Bankruptcy seemed coming towards him, slow, perhaps, but sure. And meantime to live with the sword hanging over him by a hair!

Soon matters approached a crisis; several large drafts were drawn, which would have cleaned the bank out, but that the yearly rents of a wealthy nobleman had for some days past been flowing in. This nobleman had gone to explore Syria and Assyria. He was a great traveller, who contrived to live up to his income at home, but had never been able to spend a quarter of it abroad, for want of enemies and masters—better known as friends and servants—to help him. So Hardie was safe for some months, unless there should be an extraordinary run on him, and that was not likely this year; the panic had subsided, and, *nota bene*, his credit had never stood higher. The reason was, he had been double-faced; had always spoken against railways: and his wise words were public, whereas his fatal acts had been done in the dark.

But now came a change, a bitter revulsion, over this

tossed mind: hope and patience failed at last, and his virtue, being a thing of habit and traditions, rather than of the soul, wore out; nay, more, this man, who had sacrificed so nobly to commercial integrity, filled with hate of his idol, and contempt of himself. "Idiot!" said he, "to throw away a fortune fighting for honor,— a greater bubble than that which has ruined me— instead of breaking like a man, with a hidden purse, and starting fair again as sensible traders do."

No honest man in the country that year repented of his vices so sincerely as Richard Hardie loathed his virtue. And he did not confine his penitence to sentiment; he began to spend his days at the bank poring over the books, and to lay out his arithmetical genius in a subtle process, that should enable him by degrees to withdraw a few thousands from human eyes for his future use, despite the feeble safeguards of the existing law. In other words, Richard Hardie, like thousands before him, was fabricating and maturing a false balance-sheet.

One man in his time plays many animals. Hardie at this period turned mole. He burrowed darkling into *ærs alienum*. There is often one of these sleek miners in a bank: it is a section of human zoology the journals have lately enlarged on, and drawn the pains-taking creature grubbing and mining away brief opulence; and briefer penal servitude than one could wish. I rely on my reader having read these really able sketches of my contemporaries; and spare him minute details that possess scarcely a new feature, except one: in that bank was not only a mole; but a mole-catcher: and contrary to custom, the mole was the master, the mole-catcher the servant. The latter had no hostile views; far from it; he was rather attached to his master: but his attention was roused by the youngest clerk, a boy of sixteen,

being so often sent for into the bank parlor, to copy into the books some arithmetical result, without its process. Attention soon became suspicion; and suspicion found many little things to feed on, till it grew to certainty. But the outer world was none the wiser: the mole-catcher was no chatterbox; he was a solitary man; no wife nor mistress about him; and he revered the mole, and liked him better than anything in the world — *except money*.

Thus the great banker stood, a colossus of wealth and stability to the eye, though ready to crumble at a touch; and indeed self-doomed; for bankruptcy was now his game.

This was a miserable man; far more miserable than his son whose happiness he had thwarted: his face was furrowed, and his hair thinned by secret struggle: and of all the things that gnawed him, like the fox, beneath his Spartan robe, none was more bitter than to have borrowed five thousand pounds of his children, and sunk it.

His wife's father, a keen man of business, who saw there was little affection on his side, had settled his daughter's money on her for life, and, in case of her death, on the children upon coming of age. The marriage of Alfred or Jane would be sure to expose him; settlements would be proposed; lawyers engaged to peer into the trust, etc. No they *must* remain single for the present, or else marry wealth.

So, when his son announced an attachment to a young lady living in a suburban villa, it was a terrible blow, though he took it with outward calm, as usual. But if, instead of prating about beauty, virtue, and breeding, Alfred had told him hard cash in five figures could be settled by the bride's family on the young couple, he would have welcomed the wedding with great external indifference, but a secret gush of joy; for then he could

throw himself on Alfred's generosity, and be released from that one corroding debt; perhaps allowed to go on drawing the interest of the remainder.

Thus, in reality, all the interests, with which this story deals, converged towards one point: the fourteen thousand pounds. Richard Hardie's opposition was a mere misunderstanding; and, if he had been told of the cash, and to what purpose Mrs. Dodd destined it, and then put on board the *Agra* in the Straits of Gasper, he would have calmly taken off his coat, and helped to defend the bearer of it against all assailants as stoutly, and, to all appearance, imperturbably, as he had fought that other bitter battle at home. For there was something heroic in this erring man, though his rectitude depended on circumstances.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE way the pirate dropped the mask, showed his black teeth, and bore up in chase, was terrible: so dilates and bounds the sudden tiger on his unwary prey. There were stout hearts among the officers of the peaceable Agra; but danger in a new form shakes the brave; and this was their first pirate: their dismay broke out in ejaculations not loud but deep. "Hush!" said Dodd, doggedly; "the lady!"

Mrs. Beresford had just come on deck to enjoy the balmy morning.

"Sharpe," said Dodd, in a tone that conveyed no suspicion to the new-comer, "set the royals, and flying jib. Port!"

"Port it is," cried the man at the helm.

"Steer due south!" And, with these words in his mouth, Dodd dived to the gun-deck.

By this time elastic Sharpe had recovered the first shock; and the order to crowd sail on the ship galled his pride and his manhood; he muttered, indignantly, "The white feather!" This eased his mind, and he obeyed orders briskly as ever. While he and his hands were setting every rag the ship could carry on that tack, the other officers, having unluckily no orders to execute, stood gloomy and helpless, with their eyes glued by a sort of sombre fascination, on that coming fate: and they literally jumped and jarred, when Mrs. Beresford, her heart opened by the lovely day, broke in on their nerves with her light treble.

"What a sweet morning, gentlemen! After all, a

voyage is a delightful thing; oh, what a splendid sea! and the very breeze is warm. Ah! and there's a little ship sailing along: here, Freddy, Freddy darling, leave off beating the sailor's legs, and come here and see this pretty ship. What a pity it is so far off! Ah, ah! what is that dreadful noise?"

For her horrible small talk, that grated on those anxious souls like the mockery of some infantine fiend, was cut short by ponderous blows and tremendous smashing below. It was the captain staving in water-casks: the water poured out at the scuppers.

"Clearing the lee guns," said a middy, off his guard.

Colonel Kenealy pricked up his ears, drew his cigar from his mouth, and smelt powder. "What, for action?" said he briskly. "Where's the enemy?"

Fullalove made him a signal, and they went below.

Mrs. Beresford had not heard, or not appreciated, the remark: she prattled on till she made the mates and midshipmen shudder.

Realize the situation, and the strange incongruity between the senses and the mind in these poor fellows! The day had ripened its beauty; beneath a purple heaven shone, sparkled, and laughed a blue sea, in whose waves the tropical sun seemed to have fused his beams; and beneath that fair, sinless, peaceful sky, wafted by a balmy breeze over those smiling, transparent golden waves, a bloodthirsty pirate bore down on them with a crew of human tigers; and a lady babble babble babble babble babbled in their quivering ears.

But now the captain came bustling on deck, eyed the loftier sails, saw they were drawing well, appointed four midshipmen a staff to convey his orders; gave Bayliss charge of the carronades, Grey of the cutlasses, and directed Mr. Tickell to break the bad news gently to

Mrs. Beresford, and to take her below to the orlop deck ; ordered the purser to serve out beef, biscuit, and grog to all hands, saying, "Men can't work on an empty stomach ; and fighting is hard work ;" then beckoned the officers to come round him. "Gentlemen," said he confidentially, "in crowding sail on this ship I had no hope of escaping that fellow on this tack, but I was, and am, most anxious to gain the open sea, where I can square my yards and run for it, if I see a chance. At present I shall carry on till he comes up within range ; and then, to keep the company's canvas from being shot to rags, I shall shorten sail ; and to save ship and cargo and all our lives, I shall fight while a plank of her swims. Better be killed in hot blood than walk the plank in cold."

The officers cheered faintly ; the captain's dogged resolution stirred up theirs.

The pirate had gained another quarter of a mile and more. The ship's crew were hard at their beef and grog, and agreed among themselves it was a comfortable ship ; they guessed what was coming, and woe to the ship in that hour if the captain had not won their respect. Strange to say, there were two gentlemen in the Agra to whom the pirate's approach was not altogether unwelcome. Colonel Kenealy and Mr. Fullalove were rival sportsmen and rival theorists. Kenealy stood out for a smooth bore, and a four-ounce ball : Fullalove for a rifle of his own construction. Many a doughty argument they had, and many a bragging match ; neither could convert the other. At last Fullalove hinted that by going ashore at the Cape, and getting each behind a tree at one hundred yards, and popping at one another, one or other would be convinced.

"Well, but," said Kenealy, "if he is dead, he will be no wiser ; besides, to a fellow like me, who has had the

luxury of popping at his enemies, popping at a friend is poor insipid work."

"That is true," said the other regretfully. "But I reckon we shall never settle it by argument."

Theorists are amazing; and it was plain, by the alacrity with which these good creatures loaded the rival instruments, that to them the pirate came not so much a pirate as a solution. Indeed, Kenealy, in the act of charging his piece, was heard to mutter, "Now this is lucky." However, these theorists were no sooner loaded, than something occurred to make them more serious. They were sent for in haste to Dodd's cabin: they found him giving Sharpe a new order.

"Shorten sail to the taupsles and jib, get the colors ready on the halliards, and then send the men aft."

Sharpe ran out full of zeal, and tumbled over Ramgolam, who was stooping remarkably near the keyhole. Dodd hastily bolted the cabin-door, and looked with trembling lip and piteous earnestness in Kenealy's face and Fullalove's. They were mute with surprise at a gaze so eloquent yet mysterious.

He manned himself, and opened his mind to them with deep emotion, yet not without a certain simple dignity.

"Colonel," said he, "you are an old friend; *you*, sir, are a new one; but I esteem you highly, and what my young gentlemen chaff you about, you calling all men brothers, and making that poor negro love you, instead of fear you, that shows me you have a great heart. My dear friends, I have been unlucky enough to bring my children's fortune on board this ship: here it is, under my shirt. Fourteen thousand pounds. This weighs me down. Oh, if they should lose it after all! Do pray give me a hand apiece, and pledge your sacred words to take it home safe to my wife at Barkington, if you, or

either of you, should see this bright sun set to-day, and I should not."

"Why, Dodd, old fellow," said Kenealy cheerfully, "this is not the way to go into action."

"Colonel," replied Dodd, "to save this ship and cargo I must be wherever the bullets are, and I will, too."

Fullalove, more sagacious than the worthy colonel, said earnestly, "Captain Dodd, may I never see Broadway again, and never see heaven at the end of my time, if I fail you. There's my hand."

"And mine," said Kenealy warmly.

They all three joined hands, and Dodd seemed to cling to them.

"God bless you both! God bless you! Oh, what a weight your true hands have pulled off my heart! Good-by for a few minutes. The time is short. I'll just offer a prayer to the Almighty for wisdom, and then I'll come up and say a word to the men, and fight the ship, according to my lights."

Sail was no sooner shortened, and the crew ranged, than the captain came briskly on deck, saluted, jumped on a carronade, and stood erect. He was not the man to show the crew his forebodings.

(Pipe.) "Silence fore and aft."

"My men, the schooner coming up on our weather quarter is a Portuguese pirate. His character is known: he scuttles all the ships he boards, dishonors the women, and murders the crew. We cracked on to get out of the narrows, and now we have shortened sail to fight this blackguard, and teach him to molest a British ship. I promise, in the Company's name, twenty pounds prize money to every man before the mast if we beat him off or out-manœuvre him, thirty if we sink him, and forty if we tow him astern into a friendly port. Eight guns are clear below, three on the weather side, five on the

lee ; for, if he knows his business, he will come up on the lee quarter : if he doesn't, that is no fault of yours nor mine. The muskets are all loaded, the cutlasses ground like razors " —

" Hurrah ! "

" We have got women to defend " —

" Hurrah ! "

" A good ship under our feet, the God of justice overhead, British hearts in our bosoms, and British colors flying — run 'em up — over our heads. (The ship's colors flew up to the fore, and the Union Jack to the mizzen-peak.) Now, lads, I mean to fight this ship while a plank of her (stamping on the deck) swims beneath my foot, and — What do you say ? "

The reply was a fierce " Hurrah ! " from a hundred throats, so loud, so deep, so full of volume, it made the ship vibrate, and rang in the creeping-on pirate's ears. Fierce, but cunning, he saw mischief in those shortened sails, and that Union Jack, the terror of his tribe, rising to a British cheer : he lowered his mainsail, and crawled up on the weather quarter. Arrived within a cable's length, he double-reefed his foresail to reduce his rate of sailing nearly to that of the ship ; and the next moment a tongue of flame, and then a gush of smoke, issued from his lee bow, and the ball flew screaming like a sea-gull over the Agra's mizzen-top. He then put his helm up, and fired his other bow-chaser, and sent the shot hissing and skipping on the water past the ship. This prologue made the novices wince. Bayliss wanted to reply with a carronade, but Dodd forbade him sternly, saying, " If we keep him aloof we are done for. "

The pirate drew nearer, and fired both guns in succession, hulled the Agra amidships, and sent an eighteen-pound ball through her foresail. Most of the faces were pale on the quarter-deck : it was very trying to be shot

at, and hit, and make no return. The next double discharge sent one shot smash through the stern cabin-window, and splintered the bulwark with another, wounding a seaman slightly.

“LIE DOWN FORWARD!” shouted Dodd. “Bayliss, give him a shot.”

The carronade was fired with a tremendous report, but no visible effect. The pirate crept nearer, steering in and out like a snake to avoid the carronades, and firing those two heavy guns alternately into the devoted ship. He hulled the *Agra* now nearly every shot.

The two available carronades replied noisily, and jumped as usual: they sent one thirty-two-pound shot clean through the schooner’s deck and side, but that was literally all they did worth speaking of.

“Curse them!” cried Dodd; “load them with grape! they are not to be trusted with ball. And all my eighteen-pounders dumb! The coward won’t come alongside and give them a chance.”

At the next discharge the pirate chipped the mizzen-mast, and knocked a sailor into dead pieces on the fore-castle. Dodd put his helm down ere the smoke cleared, and got three carronades to bear, heavily laden with grape. Several pirates fell, dead or wounded, on the crowded deck, and some holes appeared in the foresail; this one interchange was quite in favor of the ship.

But the lesson made the enemy more cautious: he crept nearer, but steered so adroitly, now right astern, now on the quarter, that the ship could seldom bring more than one carronade to bear, while he raked her fore and aft with grape and ball.

In this alarming situation Dodd kept as many of the men below as possible; but, for all he could do, four were killed and seven wounded.

Fullalove’s word came too true: it was the sword-fish

and the whale: it was a fight of hammer and anvil; one hit, the other made a noise. Cautious and cruel, the pirate hung on the poor hulking creature's quarters, and raked her at point-blank distance. He made her pass a bitter time. And her captain! To see the splintering hull, the parting shrouds, the shivered gear, and hear the shrieks and groans of his wounded, and he unable to reply in kind! The sweat of agony poured down his face. Oh, if he could but reach the open sea, and square his yards, and make a long chase of it; perhaps fall in with aid. Wincing under each heavy blow, he crept doggedly, patiently, on, towards that one visible hope.

At last, when the ship was cloved with shot, and peppered with grape, the channel opened; in five minutes more he could put her dead before the wind.

No. The pirate, on whose side luck had been from the first, got half a broadside to bear at long musket shot, killed a midshipman by Dodd's side, cut away two of the *Agra's* mizzen shrouds, wounded the gaff, and cut the jib-stay: down fell that powerful sail into the water, and dragged across the ship's forefoot, stopping her way to the open sea she panted for. The mates groaned: the crew cheered stoutly, as British tars do in any great disaster. The pirates yelled with ferocious triumph, like the devils they looked.

But most human events, even calamities, have two sides. The *Agra* being brought almost to a standstill, the pirate forged ahead against his will, and the combat took a new and terrible form. The elephant gun popped, and the rifle cracked, in the *Agra's* mizzen-top, and the man at the pirate's helm jumped into the air and fell dead; both theorists claimed him. Then the three carronades peppered him hotly, and he hurled an iron shower back with fatal effect. Then at last the long eighteen-

pounders on the gun-deck got a word in. The old Niler was not the man to miss a vessel alongside in a quiet sea: he sent two round shot clean through him; the third splintered his bulwark, and swept across his deck.

“His masts! fire at his masts!” roared Dodd to Monk through his trumpet; he then got the jib clear, and made what sail he could without taking all the hands from the guns.

This kept the vessels nearly alongside a few minutes, and the fight was hot as fire. The pirate now for the first time hoisted his flag. It was black as ink. His crew yelled as it rose: the Britons, instead of quailing, cheered with fierce derision; the pirate’s wild crew of yellow Malays, black chinless Papuans, and bronzed Portuguese, served their side guns, twelve-pounders, well and with ferocious cries; the white Britons, drunk with battle now, naked to the waist, grimed with powder, and spotted like leopards with blood, their own and their mates’, replied with loud undaunted cheers, and deadly hail of grape from the quarter-deck; while the master-gunner and his mates, loading with a rapidity the mixed races opposed could not rival, hulled the schooner well between wind and water, and then fired chain shot at her masts, as ordered, and began to play the mischief with her shrouds and rigging. Meantime, Fullalove and Kenealy, aided by Vespasian, who loaded, were quietly butchering the pirate crew two a minute, and hoped to settle the question they were fighting for; smooth bore *v.* rifle: but unluckily neither fired once without killing; so “there was nothing proven.”

The pirate, bold as he was, got sick of fair fighting first; he hoisted his mainsail and drew rapidly ahead, with a slight bearing to windward, and dismounted a carronade and stove in the ship’s quarter-boat, by way of a parting kick.

The men hurled a contemptuous cheer after him ; they thought they had beaten him off. But Dodd knew better. He was but retiring a little way to make a more deadly attack than ever : he would soon wear, and cross the Agra's defenceless bows, to rake her fore and aft at pistol-shot distance : or grapple, and board the enfeebled ship two hundred strong.

Dodd flew to the helm, and with his own hands put it hard a-weather, to give the deck guns one more chance, the last, of sinking or disabling the destroyer. As the ship obeyed, and a deck gun bellowed below him, he saw a vessel running out from Long Island, and coming swiftly up on his lee quarter.

It was a schooner. Was she coming to his aid ?

Horror ! A black flag floated from her foremast head.

While Dodd's eyes were staring almost out of his head at this death-blow to hope, Monk fired again ; and just then a pale face came close to Dodd's, and a solemn voice whispered in his ear : "Our ammunition is nearly done !"

Dodd seized Sharpe's hand convulsively, and pointed to the pirate's consort coming up to finish them ; and said, with the calm of a brave man's despair, "Cutlasses ! and die hard !"

At that moment the master-gunner fired his last gun. It sent a chain shot on board the retiring pirate, took off a Portuguese head and spun it clean into the sea ever so far to windward, and cut the schooner's foremast so nearly through that it trembled and nodded, and presently snapped with a loud crack, and came down like a broken tree, with the yard and sail ; the latter overlapping the deck and burying itself, black flag and all, in the sea ; and there, in one moment, lay the destroyer buffeting and wriggling — like a heron on the water with his long wing broken — an utter cripple.

The victorious crew raised a stunning cheer.

“Silence!” roared Dodd, with his trumpet. “All hands make sail!”

He set his courses, bent a new jib, and stood out to windward close hauled, in hopes to make a good offing, and then put his ship dead before the wind, which was now rising to a stiff breeze. In doing this, he crossed the crippled pirate’s bows within eighty yards: and sore was the temptation to rake him; but his ammunition being short, and his danger being imminent from the other pirate, he had the self-command to resist the great temptation.

He hailed the mizzen-top: “Can you two hinder them from firing that gun?”

“I rather think we can,” said Fullalove, “eh, colonel?” and tapped his long rifle.

The ship no sooner crossed the schooner’s bows¹ than a Malay ran forward with a linstock. Pop went the colonel’s ready carbine, and the Malay fell over dead, and the linstock flew out of his hand. A tall Portuguese, with a movement of rage, snatched it up, and darted to the gun: the Yankee rifle cracked, but a moment too late. Bang! went the pirate’s bow-chaser, and crashed into the Agra’s side, and passed nearly through her.

“Ye missed him! ye missed him!” cried the rival theorist, joyfully. He was mistaken: the smoke cleared, and there was the pirate captain leaning wounded against the mainmast with a Yankee bullet in his shoulder, and his crew uttering yells of dismay and vengeance. They jumped and raged and brandished their knives and made horrid gesticulations of revenge; and the white eyeballs of the Malays and Papuans glittered fiendishly; and the wounded captain raised his sound arm and had a signal hoisted to his consort, and she bore up in chase, and

¹ Being disabled, the schooner’s head had come round to windward, though she was drifting to leeward.

jamming her fore latine flat as a board, lay far nearer the wind than the *Agra* could, and sailed three feet to her two, besides. On this superiority being made clear, the situation of the merchant vessel, though not so utterly desperate as before Monk fired his lucky shot, became pitiable enough. If she ran before the wind, the fresh pirate would cut her off: if she lay to windward, she might postpone the inevitable and fatal collision with a foe as strong as that she had only escaped by a rare piece of luck; but this would give the crippled pirate time to refit and unite to destroy her. Add to this the failing ammunition and the thinned crew.

Dodd cast his eyes all round the horizon for help.

The sea was blank.

The bright sun was hidden now; drops of rain fell, and the wind was beginning to sing, and the sea to rise a little.

"Gentlemen," said he, "let us kneel down and pray for wisdom in this sore strait."

He and his officers kneeled on the quarter-deck. When they rose, Dodd stood rapt about a minute; his great thoughtful eye saw no more the enemy, the sea, nor anything external; it was turned inward. His officers looked at him in silence.

"Sharpe," said he, at last, "there *must* be a way out of them both with such a breeze as this is now, if we could but see it."

"Ay, *if*," groaned Sharpe.

Dodd mused again.

"About ship!" said he, softly, like an absent man.

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Steer due north!" said he, still like one whose mind was elsewhere.

While the ship was coming about, he gave minute orders to the mates and the gunner, to insure co-opera-

tion in the delicate and dangerous manœuvres that were sure to be at hand.

The wind was west-north-west : he was standing north : one pirate lay on his lee beam stopping a leak between wind and water, and hacking the deck clear of his broken mast and yards. The other fresh, and thirsting for the easy prey, came up to weather on him and hang on his quarter, pirate fashion.

When they were distant about a cable's length, the fresh pirate, to meet the ship's change of tactics, changed his own, luffed up, and gave the ship a broadside, well aimed but not destructive, the guns being loaded with ball.

Dodd, instead of replying immediately, put his helm hard up and ran under the pirate's stern, while he was jammed up in the wind, and with his five eighteen-pounders raked him fore and aft, then paying off, gave him three carronades crammed with grape and canister; the rapid discharge of eight guns made the ship tremble, and enveloped her in thick smoke; loud shrieks and groans were heard from the schooner; the smoke cleared; the pirate's mainsail hung on deck, his jib-boom was cut off like a carrot and the sail struggling; his foresail looked lace, lanes of dead and wounded lay still or writhing on his deck, and his lee scuppers ran blood into the sea. Dodd squared his yards and bore away.

The ship rushed down the wind, leaving the schooner staggered and all abroad. But not for long; the pirate wore, and fired his bow-chasers at the now flying Agra, split one of the carronades in two, and killed a Lascar, and made a hole in the foresail; this done, he hoisted his mainsail again in a trice, sent his wounded below, flung his dead overboard, to the horror of their foes, and came after the flying ship, yawing and firing his bow-

chasers. The ship was silent. She had no shot to throw away. Not only did she take these blows like a coward, but all signs of life disappeared on her, except two men at the wheel, and the captain on the main gangway.

Dodd had ordered the crew out of the rigging, armed them with cutlasses, and laid them flat on the forecastle. He also compelled Kenealy and Fullalove to come down out of harm's way, no wiser on the smooth bore question than they went up.

The great patient ship ran environed by her foes : one destroyer right in her course, another in her wake, following her with yells of vengeance, and pounding away at her — but no reply.

Suddenly the yells of the pirates on both sides ceased, and there was a moment of dead silence on the sea.

Yet nothing fresh had happened.

Yes, this had happened : the pirates to windward and the pirates to leeward of the Agra had found out, at one and the same moment, that the merchant captain they had lashed and bullied and tortured, was a patient but tremendous man. It was not only to rake the fresh schooner, he had put his ship before the wind, but also by a double, daring master-stroke to hurl his monster ship bodily on the other. Without a foresail she could never get out of her way. The pirate crew had stopped the leak, and cut away and unshipped the broken foremast, and were stepping a new one, when they saw the huge ship bearing down in full sail. Nothing easier than to slip out of her way could they get the foresail to draw ; but the time was short, the deadly intention manifest, the coming destruction swift.

After that solemn silence came a storm of cries and curses, as their seamen went to work to fit the yard and raise the sail ; while their fighting men seized their

matchlocks and trained the guns. They were well commanded by an heroic, able villain. Astern the consort thundered ; but the Agra's response was a dead silence more awful than broadsides.

For then was seen with what majesty the enduring Anglo-Saxon fights.

One of that indomitable race on the gangway, one at the foremast, two at the wheel, conned and steered the great ship down on a hundred matchlocks and a grinning broadside, just as they would have conned and steered her into a British harbor.

"Starboard !" said Dodd, in a deep calm voice, with a motion of his hand.

"Starboard it is."

The pirate wriggled ahead a little. The man forward made a silent signal to Dodd.

"Port !" said Dodd, quietly.

"Port it is."

But at this critical moment the pirate astern sent a mischievous shot and knocked one of the men to atoms at the helm.

Dodd waved his hand without a word, and another man rose from the deck and took his place in silence, and laid his unshaking hand on the wheel stained with that man's warm blood whose place he took.

The high ship was now scarce sixty yards distant ; *she seemed to know* : she reared her lofty figure-head with great awful shoots into the air.

But now the panting pirates got their new foresail hoisted with a joyful shout ; it drew, the schooner gathered way, and their furious consort close on the Agra's heels just then scourged her deck with grape.

"Port !" said Dodd, calmly.

"Port it is."

The giant prow darted at the escaping pirate. That

acre of coming canvas took the wind out of the swift schooner's foresail; it flapped; oh, then she was doomed! That awful moment parted the races on board her: the Papuans and Sooloos, their black faces livid and blue with horror, leaped yelling into the sea, or crouched and whimpered; the yellow Malays and brown Portuguese, though blanched to one color now, turned on death like dying panthers, fired two cannon slap into the ship's bows, and snapped their muskets and matchlocks at their solitary executioner on the ship's gangway, and out flew their knives like crushed wasps' stings. CRASH! the Indiaman's cutwater in thick smoke beat in the schooner's broadside: down went her masts to leeward like fishing-rods whipping the water; there was a horrible shrieking yell; wild forms leaped off on the Agra, and were hacked to pieces almost ere they reached the deck — a surge, a chasm in the sea, filled with an instant rush of ingulfing waves, a long, awful, grating, grinding noise never to be forgotten in this world, all along under the ship's keel — and the fearful majestic monster passed on over the blank she had made, with a pale crew standing silent and awe-struck on her deck; a cluster of wild heads and staring eyeballs bobbing like corks in her foaming wake, sole relic of the blotted-out destroyer; and a wounded man staggering on the gangway, with hands uplifted and staring eyes.

Shot in two places, the head and the breast.

With a loud cry of pity and dismay, Sharpe, Fullalove, Kenealy, and others rushed to catch him; but, ere they got near, the captain of the triumphant ship fell down on his hands and knees, his head sunk over the gangway, and his blood ran fast and pattered in the midst of them, on the deck he had defended so bravely.

CHAPTER IX.

THEY got to the wounded captain and raised him. He revived a little; and the moment he caught sight of Mr. Sharpe he clutched him, and cried, "Stunsels!"

"O captain!" said Sharpe, "let the ship go; it is you we are anxious for now."

At this Dodd lifted up his hands and beat the air impatiently, and cried again in the thin, querulous voice of a wounded man, but eagerly, "STUNSELS! STUNSELS!"

On this Sharpe gave the command:—

"Make sail! All hands set stunsels 'low and aloft!"

While the unwounded hands swarmed into the rigging, the surgeon came aft in all haste; but Dodd declined him till all his men should have been looked to; meantime he had himself carried to the poop, and laid on a mattress, his bleeding head bound tight with a wet cambric handkerchief, and his pale face turned towards the hostile schooner astern. She had hove to, and was picking up the survivors of her blotted-out consort. The group on the Agra's quarter-deck watched her to see what she would do next; flushed with immediate success, the younger officers crowd their fears, she would not be game to attack them again; Dodd's fears ran the other way. He said, in the weak voice to which he was now reduced, "They are taking a wet blanket aboard; that crew of blackguards we swamped won't want any more of us; it all depends on the pirate captain; if he is not drowned, then blow wind, rise sea, or there's trouble ahead for us."

As soon as the schooner had picked up the last

swimmer, she hoisted foresail, mainsail, and jib, with admirable rapidity, and bore down in chase.

The *Agra* had, meantime, got a start of more than a mile, and was now running before a stiff breeze with studding sails alow and aloft.

In an hour the vessels ran nearly twelve miles, and the pirate had gained half a mile.

At the end of the next hour they were out of sight of land; wind and sea rising, and the pirate only a quarter of a mile astern.

The schooner was now rising and falling on the waves; the ship only nodding, and firm as a rock.

“Blow wind, rise sea!” faltered Dodd.

Another half-hour passed without perceptibly altering the position of the vessels. Then suddenly the wounded captain laid aside his glass, after a long examination, and rose unaided to his feet in great excitement, and found his manly voice for a moment; he shook his fist at the now pitching schooner, and roared, “Good-by, ye Portuguese lubber! out-fought — out-manœuvred — AND OUT-SAILED!”

It was a burst of exultation rare for him; he paid for it by sinking faint and helpless into his friend’s arms; and the surgeon, returning soon after, insisted on his being taken to his cabin, and kept quite quiet.

As they were carrying him below, the pirate captain made the same discovery; that the ship was gaining on him. He hauled to the wind directly, and abandoned the chase.

When the now receding pirate was nearly hull down, the sun began to set. Mr. Tickell looked at him, and said, “Hallo, old fellow! what are *you* about? Why, it isn’t two o’clock.”

The remark was quite honest. He really feared for a moment that orb was mistaken, and would get himself,

and others, into trouble. However, the middy proved to be wrong, and the sun right to a minute; time flies fast, fighting.

Mrs. Beresford came on deck with brat and poodle. Fred, a destructive child, clapped his hands with glee at the holes in the canvas; Snap toddled about smelling the blood of the slain, and wagging his tail, by halves, perplexed. "Well, gentlemen," said Mrs. Beresford, "I hope you have made noise enough over one's head; and what a time you did take to beat that little bit of a thing. — Freddy, be quiet; you worry me. Where is your bearer? — Will anybody oblige me by finding Ramgolam?"

"I will," said Mr. Tickell, hastily, and ran off for the purpose; but he returned after some time with a long face. No Ramgolam to be found.

Fullalove referred her, with humor-twinkling eye, to Vespasian. "I have a friend here who says he can tell you something about him."

"Can you, my good man?" inquired the lady, turning haughtily towards the negro.

"Iss, missy," said Vespasian, showing his white teeth in a broad grin, "dis child knows where to find dat ar nigger, widout him been and absquatulated since."

"Then go and fetch him directly."

Vespasian went off with an obedient start.

This annoyed Fullalove, interfered with his system. "Madam," said he, gravely, "would you oblige me by bestowing on my friend a portion of that courtesy with which you favor me, and which becomes you so gracefully?"

"Certainly not," replied Mrs. Beresford. "Mr. Fullalove, I am out of patience with you; the idea of a sensible, intelligent gentleman like you calling that creature your friend! and you an American, where they do noth-

ing but whip them from morning till night. Who ever heard of making friends with a black? Now, what is the meaning of this? I detest practical jokes." For the stalwart negro had returned, bringing a tall bread-bag in his arms. He now set it up before her, remarking, "Dis yar bag white outside, but him nation black inside." To confirm his words, he drew off the bag, and revealed Ramgolam, his black skin powdered with meal. The good-natured negro then blew the flour off his face, and dusted him a bit. The spectators laughed heartily, but Ramgolam never moved a muscle. Not a morsel decomposed at what would have made an European miserably ashamed, even in a pantomime, the Caucasian darky retained all his dignity, while the African one dusted him; but, being dusted, he put on his obsequiousness, stepped forward, joined his palms together to Mrs. Beresford, like mediæval knights and modern children at their devotions, and addressed her thus:—

"Daughter of light, he who basks in your beams, said to himself, 'The pirates are upon us, those children of blood, whom Sheitan their master blast forever! They will ravish the Queen of Sunshine and the ayahs, and throw the sahibs and sailors into the sea; but, bread being the staff of existence, these foxes of the water will not harm it, but keep it for their lawless appetites; therefore, Ramgolam, son of Chittroo, son of Soonarayan, will put the finger of silence on the lip of discretion, and be bread in the day of adversity. The sons of Sheitan will peradventure return to dry land, and close the eye of watchfulness; then will I emerge like the sun from a cloud, and depart in peace.'"

"Oh, very well," said Mrs. Beresford; "then you are an abominable egotist, that is all, and a coward; and, thank Heaven, Freddy and I were defended by English and Americans, and — hem! — their friends, and not by

Hindoos." She added, charmingly, "This shows me my first words on coming here ought to have been to offer my warmest thanks to the brave men who *have* defended me and my child," and swept them so queenly a courtesy, that the men's hats and caps flew off in an instant. "Mr. Black," said she, turning with a voice of honey to Vespasian, but aiming obliquely at Fullalove's heart, "*would* you oblige me by kicking that dog a *little*; he is always smelling what does not belong to him. Why, it is blood. Oh!" and she turned pale in a moment.

Sharpe thought some excuse necessary. "You see, ma'am, we haven't had time to clean the decks since."

"It is the blood of men; of the poor fellows who have defended us so nobly," faltered the lady, trembling visibly.

"Well, ma'am," said Sharpe, still half apologetically, "you know a ship can't fight all day long without an accident or two." He added with nautical simplicity and love of cleanliness, "However, the deck will be cleaned and holy-stoned to-morrow, long before you turn out."

Mrs. Beresford was too much overcome to explain how much deeper her emotion was than a dislike to stained floors. She turned faint, and, on getting the better of that, went down to her cabin crying. Thence issued a royal order that the wounded were to have wine and every luxury they could fancy, without limit or stint, at her expense.

The next day a deep gloom reigned in the ship. The crew were ranged in their Sunday clothes, and bare-headed. A grating was rigged. Sharpe read the burial service; and the dead, each man sewed up in his hammock, with a thirty-two-pound shot, glided off the grating into the sea with a sullen plunge; while their shipmates cried so, that the tears dripped on the deck.

With these regrets for the slain, too violent to last,

was mingled a gloomy fear that death had a heavier blow in store. The surgeon's report of Captain Dodd was most alarming; he had become delirious about midnight, and so continued.

Sharpe commanded the ship; and the rough sailors stepped like cats over that part of the deck beneath which their unconscious captain lay. If two men met on the quarter-deck, a look of anxious but not hopeful inquiry was sure to pass between them.

Among the constant inquirers was Ramgolam. The grave Hindoo often waylaid the surgeon at the captain's door, to get the first intelligence. This marked sympathy with the hero in extremity was hardly expected from a sage who at the first note of war's trumpet had vanished in a meal-bag. However, it went down to his credit. One person, however, took a dark view of this innocent circumstance. But then that hostile critic was Vespasian, a rival in matters of tint. He exploded in one of those droll rages darkies seem liable to. "Massa Cunnel," said he, "what for dat yar nigger always prowling about the capn's door? What for he ask so many stupid questions? Dat ole fox arter no good; him heart so black as um skin, dam ole nigger!"

Fullalove suggested slyly that a person with a dark skin might have a grateful heart. And the colonel, who dealt little in innuendo, said, "Come, don't you be so hard on jet, you ebony!"

"Bery well, gemmen," replied Vespasian, ceremoniously, and with seeming acquiescence. Then, with sudden ire, "Because Goramighty made you white, you tink you bery wise without any more trouble. Dat ar nigger am an abommable egotisk."

"Pray what does that mean?" inquired Kenealy, innocently.

"What him mean? what him mean? Yah! yah!"

“Yes. What does it mean?”

“What him mean? Yah! What, dinn’t you hear Missy Besford misceal him an abommable egotisk?”

“Yes,” said Fullalove, winking to Kenealy; “but we don’t know what it means. Do you, sir?”

“Iss, sar. Dat are expression he signify a darned old cuss dat says to dis child, ‘My lord Vespasium, take benevolence on your insidious slave, and invest me in a bread-bag,’ instead of fighting for de ladies like a freen-independum citizen. Now you two go fast asleep. Dis child he shut one eye and open de oder bery wide open on dat ar niggar.” And with this mysterious threat he stalked away.

His contempt for a black skin, his ebullitions of unexpected ire, his turgid pomposity, and love of long terms, may make the reader smile; but they could hardly amuse his friends just then: everything that touched upon Dodd was too serious now. The surgeon sat up with him nearly all night. In the daytime those two friends sat for hours in his cabin, watching sadly, and silently moistening his burning brow and his parched lips.

At length, one afternoon, there came a crisis, which took an unfavorable turn. Then the surgeon, speaking confidentially to these two stanch friends, inquired if they had asked themselves what should be done with the body. “Why I ask,” said he, “we are in a very hot latitude; and if you wish to convey it to Barkington, the measures ought to be taken in time, in fact, within an hour or two after death.”

The poor friends were shocked and sickened by this horrible piece of foresight. But Colonel Kenealy said with tears in his eyes that his old friend should never be buried like a kitten.

“Then you had better ask Sharpe to give me an order for a barrel of spirits,” said the surgeon.

“Yes, yes, for two if you like. Oh, don’t die, Dodd, my poor old fellow! How shall I ever face his wife — I remember her, the loveliest girl you ever saw — with such a tale as this? She will think it a cruel thing I should come out of it without a scratch, and a ten times better man to be dead; and so it is. It is cruel, it is unjust, it is monstrous: him to be lying there, and we muffs to be sitting croaking over him and watching for his last breath like three cursed old ravens.” And the stout colonel groaned aloud.

When the surgeon left them, they fell naturally upon another topic: the pledge they had given Dodd about the fourteen thousand pounds. They ascertained it was upon him, next his skin; but it seemed as unnecessary as it was repugnant, to remove it from his living person. They agreed, however, that instantly on his decease they would take possession of it, note the particulars, seal it up, and carry it to Mrs. Dodd, with such comfort as they could hope to give her by relating the gallant act in which his precious life was lost.

At nine P.M. the surgeon took his place by Dodd’s bedside; and the pair, whom one thing after another had drawn so close together, retired to Kenealy’s cabin.

Many a merry chat they had had there, and many a gasconade, being rival hunters; but now they were together for physical companionship in sorrow, rather than for conversation. They smoked their cigars in moody silence, and at midnight shook hands with a sigh, and parted. That sigh meant to say that in the morning all would be over.

They turned in; but ere either of them was asleep, suddenly the captain’s cabin seemed to fill with roars and shrieks of wild beasts, that made the whole ship ring in the silent night; the savage cries were answered on deck by shouts of dismay and many pattering feet

making for the companion ladder ; but the nearest persons to the cabin, and the first to reach it, were Kenealy and Fullalove, who burst in, the former with a drawn sword, the latter with a revolver, both in their night-gowns, and there saw a sight that took their breath away.

The surgeon was not there ; and two black men, one with a knife and one with his bare claws, were fighting and struggling and trampling all over the cabin at once, and the dying man sitting up in his cot, pale, and glaring at them.



TWO BLACK MEN . . . WERE FIGHTING AND STRUGGLING.

CHAPTER X.

THE two supple, dusky forms went whirling so fast, there was no grasping them to part them. But presently the negro seized the Hindoo by the throat; the Hindoo just pricked him in the arm with his knife, and the next moment his own head was driven against the side of the cabin with a stunning crack, and there he was, pinned and wriggling and bluish with fright, whereas the other swart face close against his was dark-gray with rage, and its two fireballs of eyes rolled fearfully, as none but African eyes can roll.

Fullalove pacified him by voice and touch; he withdrew his iron grasp with sullen and lingering reluctance, and glared like a disappointed mastiff. The cabin was now full, and Sharpe was for putting both the blacks in irons. No splitter of hairs was he. But Fullalove suggested there might be a moral distinction between things that looked equally dark to the eye.

“Well, then, speak quick, both of you,” said Sharpe, “or I’ll lay ye both by the heels. Ye black scoundrels, what business have *you* in the captain’s cabin, kicking up the devil’s delight?”

Thus threatened, Vespasian panted out his tale; he had discovered this nigger, as he persisted in calling the Hindoo, eternally prowling about the good captain’s door, and asking stupid questions: he had watched him, and, on the surgeon coming out with the good news that the captain was better, in had crawled “this yar abom-mable egotisk.” And he raised a ponderous fist to point the polysyllables; with this aid the sarcasm would

doubtless have been crushing, but Fullalove hung on the sable orator's arm, and told him dryly to try and speak without gesticulating. "The darned old cuss!" said Vespasian, with a pathetic sigh at not being let hit him. He resumed, and told how he had followed the Hindoo stealthily, and found him with a knife uplifted over the captain — a tremor ran through all present — robbing him. At this a loud murmur filled the room: a very ugly one, the sort of snarl with which dogs fly at dogs' throats with their teeth, and men fly at men's throats with a cord.

"Be quiet," said Sharpe imperiously. "I'll have no lynching in a vessel I command. Now then, you sir, how do you know he was robbing the captain?"

"How do I know? Yah! yah! Cap'n, if you please you tell dis unskeptical gemman whether you don't miss a lilly book out of your bosom!"

During this extraordinary scene, Dodd had been looking from one speaker to another in great surprise and some confusion; but, at the negro's direct appeal, his hand went to his breast, and clutched it with a feeble but heart-rending cry.

"Oh, him not gone far. Yah, yah!" and Vespasian stooped, and took up an oilskin packet off the floor, and laid it on the bed; "dis child seen him in dat ar nigger's hand, and heard him go whack on de floor."

Dodd hurried the packet into his bosom, then turned all gratitude to his sable friend: "Now God bless you! God bless you! Give me your honest hand! You don't know what you have done for me and mine."

And, sick as he was, he wrung Vespasian's hand with convulsive strength, and would not part with it. Vespasian patted him soothingly all over, and whimpered out, "Nebber you mind, cap'n! You bery good man; dis child bery fond of you a long time ago. You bery good

man, outrageous good man, damn good man! I propose your health; invalesce directly!"

While Dodd was speaking, the others were silent out of respect; but now Sharpe broke in, and, with the national desire to hear both sides, called on Ramgolam for his version. The Hindoo now was standing with his arms crossed on his breast, looking all the martyr, meek and dignified. He inquired of Sharpe, in very broken English, whether he spoke Hindostanee.

"Not I: nor don't act it neither," said Sharpe.

At this confession Ramgolam looked down on him with pity and mild contempt.

Mr. Tickell was put forward as interpreter.

Ramgolam (in Hindostanee). He whom Destiny, too strong for mortals, now oppresses with iron hand, and feeds with the bread of affliction —

Mr. Tickell (translating). He who by bad luck has got into trouble —

Ramgolam. Has long observed the virtues that embellish the commander of this ship resembling a mountain, and desired to imitate them —

Tickell. Saw what a good man the captain is, and wanted to be like him —

Vespasian. The darned old cuss!

Ramgolam. Seeing him often convey his hand to his bosom, I ascribed his unparalleled excellence to the possession of some sovereign talisman. (Tickell managed to translate this sentence all but the word talisman, which he rendered, with all a translator's caution, "article.") Finding him about to depart to the regions of the blessed, where such auxiliaries are not needed, and being eager to emulate his perfections here below, I came softly to the place where he lay —

Tickell. When I saw him going to slip his cable, I wanted to be as good a fellow as he is, so I crept alongside —

Ramgolam. And gently, and without force, made myself proprietor of the amulet, and inheritor of a good man's qualities —

Tickell. And quietly boned the article, and the captain's virtues. I don't know what the beggar means.

Ramgolam. Then a traitor with a dark skin, but darker soul —

Tickell. Then another black-hearted nigger —

Ramgolam. Came furiously and misappropriated the charm thus piously obtained —

Tickell. Ran in and stole it from me.

Ramgolam. And bereft me of the excellences I was inheriting; and —

Here Sharpe interrupted the dialogue by putting the misappropriator of other men's virtues in irons; and the surgeon insisted on the cabin being cleared. But Dodd would not part with the three friends yet; he begged them to watch him, and see nobody else came to take his children's fortune.

"I'll sink or swim with it; but, oh, I doubt we shall have no luck while it is aboard me. I never had a pirate alongside before in all these years. What is this? here's something *in* it now: something hard — something heavy; and — why, it is a bullet!"

On this announcement, an eager inspection took place: and, sure enough, a bullet had passed through Dodd's coat and waistcoat, etc., and through the oilskin, and the leather pocket-book, and just dented the "Hard Cash," no more.

There was a shower of comments and congratulations.

The effect of this discovery on the sick man's spirits was remarkable. "I was a villain to belie it," said he. "It is my wife's, and my children's; and it has saved my life for them."

He kissed it, and placed it in his bosom, and soon

after sunk into a peaceful slumber. The excitement had not the ill effect the surgeon feared. It somewhat exhausted him, and he slept long, but on awakening, was pronounced out of danger. To tell the truth, the tide had turned in his favor over-night; and it was to convey the good news on deck the surgeon had left him.

While Dodd was recovering, the *Agra* was beating westward, with light but contrary winds; and a good month elapsed without any incident affecting the *Hard Cash* whose singular adventures I have to record. In this dearth please put up with a little characteristic trifle, which did happen one moonlight night. Mr. Fullalove lay coiled below decks in deep abstraction, meditating a patent; and, being in shadow and silent, he saw Vespasian in the moonlight creeping on all fours like a guilty thing into the bedroom of Colonel Kenealy, then fast asleep. A horrible suspicion thrilled through Fullalove: a suspicion he waited grimly to verify.

The transatlantic mixture, Fullalove, was not merely an inventor, a philanthrope, a warrior, a preacher, a hunter, a swimmer, a fiddler, a sharp fellow, a good fellow, a Puritan, and a Bohemian, he was also a theorist: and his theory, which dub we **THE AFRICAN THEORY**, had two branches: 1. That the races of men started equal, but accident upon accident had walked some tribes up a ladder of civilization, and kicked others down it, and left others standing at the foot. 2. That the good work of centuries could be done, at a pinch, in a few generations, by artificial condensation of the favorable circumstances. For instance, secure this worker in ebony a hundred and fifty years' life, and he would sign a penal bond to produce negroes of the fourth descent equal in mind to the best contemporary white. "You can breed brains," said he, "under any skin, as inevitably as fat. It takes time and the right

crosses; but so does fat, or rather it did, for fat is an institution now." And here our republican must have a slap at thrones. "Compare," said he, "the opportunities of these distinguished gentlemen and ladies with their acts. Their seats have been high, but their minds low, I swan. They have been breeders for ages, and know the two rudiments of the science; have crossed and crossed for grenadiers, race-horses, poultry, and prize bullocks, and bred in and in for fools; but which of them has ever aspired to breed a Newton, a Pascal, a Shakespeare, a Solon, a Raphael? Yet all these were results to be obtained by the right crosses, as surely as a swift horse or a circular sow. Now fancy breeding short-horns when you might breed long heads." So Vespasian was to engender young Africa, he was to be first elevated morally and intellectually as high as he would go, and then set to breed, his partner, of course, to be elected by Fullalove, and educated as high as she would consent to without an illicit connection with the experimentalist. He would be down on their pickaninies before the parents could transfer the remnant of their own weaknesses to them, polysyllables included, and would polish these ebony chips, and, at the next cross, reckoned to rear a genius, by which time, as near as he could calculate, he the theorist would be in his dotage, and all the better, make a curious contrast in favor of young Africa.

Vespasian could not hit a barn-door sitting — with a rifle; it was purely with a view to his moral improvement, mind you, that Fullalove invited him into the mizzen-top to fight the pirate. The patient came gingerly, and shivered there with fear. But five minutes elapsing, and he not killed, that weakness gave way to a jocund recklessness; and he kept them all gay with his quaint remarks, of which I must record but one. When

they crossed the stern of the pirate, the distance was so small that the faces of that motley crew were plainly visible; now, Vespasian was a merciless critic of colored skins. "Wal," said he, turning up his nose sky high, "dis child never seen such a mixellaneous biling o' darkies as this yar; why, darned ef there ain't every color in the rainbow, from the ace of spades down to the fine dissolving views." This amazing description, coupled with his look of affront and disgust, made the white men roar; for men fighting for their lives have a greater tendency to laugh than one would think possible. Fullalove was proud of the critic, and for awhile lost sight of the pirate in his theory, which also may seem strange. But your true theorist is a man apart; he can withdraw into himself under difficulties. What said one of the breed two thousand years ago?

"Media inter prælia semper
Sideribus cœlique plagis Superisque vacavi."

"Oh, the great African heart!" said Fullalove after the battle. "By my side he fears no danger. Of all men, negroes are the most capable of friendship; their affection is a mine; and we have only worked it with the lash; and that is a ridicalous mining tool, I rather think."

When Vespasian came out so strong *versus* Ramgolam, Fullalove was even more triumphant: for, after all, it is not so much the heart as the intelligence of the negro we *albiculi* affect to doubt.

"Oh, the great African intellect!" said Fullalove, publicly, taking the bull by the horns.

"I know," said Mrs. Beresford, maliciously; "it is down in the maps as the great African Desert."

To balance his many excellences, Vespasian had an infirmity. This was an ungovernable itch for brushing

whites. If he was talking with one of that always admired, and now beloved, race, and saw a speck of dirt on him, he would brush him unobtrusively, but effectually, in full dialogue: he would steal behind a knot of whites, and brush whoever needed it, however little. Fullalove remonstrated, but in vain; on this one point instinct would not yield to reason. He could not keep his hands off a dusty white. He would have died of the miller of Dee. But the worst was, he did not stop at clothes; he loathed ill-blacked shoes; woe to all foot-leather that did not shine; his own skin furnished a perilous standard of comparison. He was eternally blacking boots *en amateur*. Fullalove got in a rage at this, and insisted on his letting his fellow-creatures' leather alone. Vespasian pleaded hard, especially for leave to black Colonel Kenealy. "The cunnell," said he, pathetically, "is such a tarnation fine gentleman spoilt for want of a lilly bit of blacking." Fullalove replied that the colonel had got a servant whose mission it was to black his shoes. This simply amused Vespasian. "A servant?" said he. "Yah! yah! What is the use of white servants? They are not biddable. Massa Fullalove, sar, Goramighty He reared all white man to kick up a dust, white servants inspecially, and the darkies to brush 'em; and likewise additionally to make their boots shine, a lilly bit." He concluded with a dark hint that the colonel's white servant's own shoes, though better blacked than his master's, were anything but mirrors, and that this child had his eye on them.

The black desperado emerged on tiptoe from Kenealy's cabin, just as Macbeth does from the murdered Duncan's chamber; only with a pair of boots in his hand instead of a pair of daggers; got into the moonlight, and finding

himself uninterrupted, assumed the whistle of innocence, and polished them to the nine, chuckling audibly.

Fullalove watched him with an eye like a rattlesnake, but kept quiet. He saw interference would only demoralize him worse; for it is more ignoble to black boots clandestinely, than bravely: men ditto.

He relieved his heart with idioms. "Darn the critter! he's fixed my flint eternally. Now I cave. I swan to man I may just hang up my fiddle, for this darky's too hard a row to hoe."

It was but a momentary dejection. The mixture was (*inter alia*) a theorist and an Anglo-Saxon, two indomitable. He concluded to temporize with the brush and breed it out.

"I'm bound to cross the obsequious cuss with the cat-awamptiouslest gal in Guinea, and one that never saw a blacking-bottle, not even in a dream." *Majora canamus.*

Being now about a hundred miles south of the Mauritius, in fine weather with a light breeze, Dodd's marine barometer began to fall steadily; and by the afternoon the declension had become so remarkable that he felt uneasy; and somewhat to the surprise of the crew, — for there was now scarce a breath of air, — furled his slight sails, treble-reefed his topsails, had his top-gallant, and royal, yards, and gaff-topsail, sent on deck, got his flying-jib-boom in, etc., and made the ship snug.

Kenealy asked him what was the matter?

"Barometer going down, moon at the full, and Jonah aboard," was the reply, uttered doggedly.

Kenealy assured him it was a beautiful evening, precursor of a fine day. "See how red the sunset is:—

'Evening red and morning gray
Are the sure signs of a fine day.'

Dodd looked, and shook his head. The sun was red,

but the wrong red, an angry red; and, as he dipped into the wave, discharged a lurid coppery hue that rushed in a moment like an embodied menace over the entire heavens. The wind ceased altogether; and in the middle of an unnatural and suspicious calm the glass went down, down, down.

The moon rose, and instantly all eyes were bent on her with suspicion; for in this latitude the hurricanes generally come at the full moon. She was tolerably clear, however; but a light scud sailing across her disk showed there was wind in the upper regions.

Dodd trusted to science, barred the lee-ports, and had the dead lights put into the stern-cabin and secured, then turned in for an hour's sleep.

Science proved a prophet. Just at seven bells, in one moment, like a thunderbolt from the sky, a heavy squall struck the ship. Under a less careful captain her lee-ports would have been open, and she might have gone to the bottom like a bullet.

"Let go the main sheet!" roared Sharpe, hastily, to a hand he had placed there on purpose; he let go, and there was the sail flapping like thunder, and the sheet lashing everything in the most dangerous way. Dodd was on deck in a moment. "Helm hard up! Hands shorten sail!"

(Pipe.) "All hands furl sail, ahoy!"

Up tumbled the crew, went cheerily to work, and by three bells in the middle watch, had hauled up what was left of the shivered mainsail, and hove the ship to, under close-reefed main topsail and storm staysails; and so the voyage was suspended.

A heavy sea got up under a scourging wind that rose and rose, till the *Agra*, under the pressure of that single sail treble-reefed, heeled over so as to dip her lee channels. This went on till the waves rolled so high, and

the squalls were so bitter, that sheets of water were actually torn off their crests and launched incessantly on deck, not only drenching Dodd and his officers, which they did not mind, but threatening to flood the ship.

Dodd battened down the hatches and stopped that game.

Then came a danger no skill could avert; the ship lurched so violently now as not merely to dip, but bury her lower deck port-pendants; and so a good deal of water found ingress through the windage. Then Dodd set a gang to the pumps, for he said, "We can hardly hope to weather this out without shipping a sea, and I won't have water coming in upon water."

And now the wind, raging and roaring like discharges of artillery, and not like wind as known in our seas, seemed to have put out all the lights of heaven. The sky was inky black, and quite close to their heads; and the wind still increasing, the vessel came down to her extreme bearings, and it was plain she would soon be on her beam ends. Sharpe and Dodd met, and holding on by the life-lines, applied their speaking-trumpets tight to each other's ears, and even then they had to bawl.

"She can't carry a rag much longer."

"No, sir, not half an hour."

"Can we furl that main taupsle?"

Sharpe shook his head. "The first moment we start a sheet, the sail will whip the mast out of her."

"You are right. Well, then, I'll cut it away."

"Volunteers, sir?"

"Ay, twelve; no more. Send them to my cabin."

Sharpe's difficulty was to keep the men back, so eager were the fine fellows to risk their lives. However, he brought twelve to the cabin, headed by Mr. Grey, who had a right, as captain of the watch, to go with them; on which right he insisted, in spite of Dodd's earnest

request that he would forego it. When Dodd saw his resolution, he dropped the friend and resumed the captain; and spoke to them through a trumpet, the first time he had ever used one in a cabin or seen one used.

“Mr. Grey and men going aloft to save the mainmast, by cutting the sail away.”

“Ay, ay, sir!”

“Service of danger, great danger!”

“Hurrah!”

“But great dangers can be made smaller by working the right way. Attend! Lay out all on the yard, and take your time from one: man at the lee yard arm; don't know who that will be, but one of the smartest men in the ship. Order to *him* is: hold his knife hand well up; rest to see; and then in knives altogether; mind and cut from you, and below the reef band; and then I hope to see all come down alive.”

Mr. Grey and his twelve men left the cabin, and hey! for the maintop. The men let the officer lead them as far as Jacob's ladder, and then hurrah for the lee yard arm! That was where all wanted to be, and but one could be; Grey was as anxious as the rest; but officers of his rank seldom go aloft, and soon fall out of their catlike habits. He had done about six ratlines, when, instead of going hand over head, he spread his arms to seize a shroud on each side of him; by this he weakened his leverage; and the wind just then came fiercer, caught him, and flattened him against the rigging as tight as if nature had caught up a mountain for a hammer and nailed him with a cedar; he was spread-eagled. The men accepted him at once as a new patent ratline with a fine resisting power; they went up him, and bounded three ordinary ratlines at a go off all his promontories, especially his shoulders and his head, receiving his compliments in the shape of hearty curses; they gained the

top, and lay out on the yard with their hair flying like streamers; and who got the place of honor but Thompson, the jolly fore-topman, who couldn't stand smoked pea soup! So strong and so weak are men.

Thompson raised his knife high; there was a pause; then in went all their knives, and away went the sail into the night of the storm, and soon seemed a sheet of writing-paper, and more likely to hit the sky than the sea. The men came down, picked their officer off the rigging, had a dram in the captain's cabin, and saw him enter their names in the log-book for good service, and in the purser's for extra grog on Sundays from there to Gravesend.

The ship was relieved, and all looked well, till the chronometer, their only guide now, announced sunset; when the wind, incredible as it may appear, increased, and one frightful squall dipped the muzzles of the lee carronades in the water.

Then was heard the first cry of distress: an appalling sound; the wail of brave men. And they had borne it all so bravely, so cheerfully, till now. But now they knew something must go, or else the ship; the suspense was awful, but very short. Crack! crash! the fore and main topmast both gone short off by the caps; and the ship recovered slowly, hesitatingly, tremblingly.

Relieving her from one danger, this subjected her to another and a terrible one. The heavy spars that had fallen, unable to break loose from the rigging, pounded the ship so savagely as to threaten to stave in her side. Add to this that with laboring so long and severely some of the ship's seams began now to open and shut and discharge the oakum, which is terrible to the bravest seamen. Yet neither this stout captain nor his crew shirked any danger men had ever grappled with since men were; Dodd ordered them to cut away the wreck to

leeward; it was done; then to windward; this, the more ticklish operation, was also done smartly; the wreck passed under the ship's quarter, and she drifted clear of it. They breathed again.

At eight bells in the first watch it began to thunder and lighten furiously; but the thunder, though close, was quite inaudible in the tremendous uproar of the wind and sea. It blew a hurricane: there were no more squalls now: but one continuous tornado, which in its passage through that great gaunt skeleton, the ship's rigging and bare poles, howled and yelled and roared so terrifically, as would have silenced a salvo of artillery fired alongside. The overwhelming sea ran in dark watery mountains crested with devilish fire. The inky blackness added supernatural horror; the wrath of the Almighty seemed upon them; and His hand to drop the black sky down on them for their funeral pall. Surely Noah from his ark saw nothing more terrible.

What is that? close on the lee bow; close: the flash of a gun; another; another; another. A ship in distress firing minute-guns in their ears; yet no sound: human thunder silenced, as God's thunder was silenced, by the uproar of his greater creatures in their mad rage. The *Agra* fired two minute-guns to let the other poor ship know she had a companion in her helplessness, and her distress; and probably a companion in her fate. Even this companionship added its mite of danger: for both ships were mere playthings of the elements; they might be tossed together; and then, what would be their fate? Two eggs clashed together in a great boiling caldron, and all the life spilt out.

Yet did each flash shoot a ray of humanity and sympathy into the thick black supernatural horror.

And now came calamity upon calamity. A tremendous sea broke the tiller at the rudderhead, and not only was

the ship in danger of falling off and shipping the sea, but the rudder hammered her awfully, and bade fair to stave in her counter, which is another word for destruction. Thus death came at them with two hands open at once.

These vessels always carry a spare tiller; they tried to ship it; but the difficulty was prodigious. No light but the miserable deck-lantern — one glowworm in Egypt supernaturally darkened — the Agra never on an even keel, and heeling over like a seesaw more than a ship; and then every time they did place the tiller, and get the strain on with their luff tackles, the awful sea gave it a blow and knocked it away like a hair.

At last they hit it off, or thought they had, for the ponderous thumps of the rudder ceased entirely. However, the ship did not obey this new tiller like the old one; her head fell off in an unlucky moment when seven waves were rolling in one, and, on coming to the windward again, she shipped a sea. It came in over her bow transversely; broke as high as the mainstay, and hid and buried the whole ship before the mast; carried away the waist bulwarks on both sides, filled the launch, and drowned the live stock which were in it; swept four water-butts and three men away into the sea, like corns and straws; and sent tons of water down the fore- and main hatchway, which was partly opened not to stifle the crew; and flooded the gun-deck ankle deep.

Dodd, who was in the cabin, sent the whole crew to the pumps, except the men at the wheel; and prepared for the worst.

In men so brave as he was, when hope dies, fear dies. His chief care now was to separate the fate of those he loved from his own. He took a bottle, inserted the fatal money in it, with a few words of love to his wife, and of direction to any stranger that should fall in with it;

secured the cork with melted sealing-wax, tied oilskin over it and melted wax on that; applied a preparation to the glass to close the pores; and to protect it against other accidents, and attract attention, fastened a black painted bladder to it by a stout tarred twine, and painted "Agra, lost at sea," in white on the bladder. He had logged each main incident of the storm with that curt, business-like accuracy which reads so cold and small a record of these great and terrible tragedies. He now made a final entry a little more in character with the situation: "About eight bells in the morning watch shipped a heavy sea forward. The rudder being now damaged, and the ship hardly manageable, brought the log and case on deck, expecting to founder shortly. Sun and moon hidden this two days, and no observation possible; but by calculation of wind and current, we should be about fifty miles to the southward of the Mauritius. God's will be done."

He got on deck with the bottle in his pocket, and the bladder peeping out; put the log, and its case, down on deck, and by means of the life-lines crawled along on his knees, and with great difficulty to the wheel. Finding the men could hardly hold on, and dreading another sea, Dodd, with his own hands, lashed them to the helm.

While thus employed, he felt the ship give a slight roll, a very slight roll, to windward. His experienced eye lightened with hope, he cast his eager glance to leeward. There it is a sailor looks for the first spark of hope. Ay, thereaway was a little, little gleam of light. He patted the helmsman on the shoulder and pointed to it; for now neither could one man speak for the wind, nor another hear. The sailor nodded joyfully.

Presently the continuous tornado broke into squalls.

Hope grew brighter.

But, unfortunately, in one furious squall the ship

broke round off so as to present her quarter to the sea at an unlucky moment; for it came seven deep again, a roaring mountain, and hurled itself over her stern and quarter. The mighty mass struck her stern frame with the weight of a hundred thousand tons of water, and drove her forward as a boy launches his toy-boat on a pond; and, though she made so little resistance, stove in the dead lights and the port frames, burst through the cabin bulkheads, and washed out all the furniture, and Colonel Kenealy in his night-gown with a table in his arms borne on water three feet deep, and carried him under the poop awning away to the lee quarter-deck scuppers; and flooded the lower deck. Above, it swept the quarter-deck clean of everything except the shrieking helmsmen; washed Dodd away like a cork, and would have carried him overboard if he had not brought up against the mainmast and grasped it like grim death, half drowned, half stunned, sorely bruised, and gasping like a porpoise ashore.

He held on by the mast in water and foam, panting. He rolled his despairing eyes around; the bulwarks fore and aft were all in ruins, with wide chasms, as between the battlements of some decayed castle; and through the gaps he saw the sea yawning wide for him. He dared not move; no man was safe a moment unless lashed to mast or helm. He held on, expecting death. But presently it struck him he could see much farther than before. He looked up; it was clearing overhead; and the uproar abating visibly. And now the wind did not decline as after a gale; extraordinary to the last, it blew itself out.

Sharpe came on deck, and crawled on all fours to his captain, and helped him to a life-line. He held on by it, and gave his orders. The wind was blown out; but the sea was as dangerous as ever. The ship began to roll to

windward. If that was not stopped, her fate was sealed. Dodd had the main trysail set, and then the fore trysail, before he would yield to go below, though drenched, and sore, and hungry, and worn out. Those sails steadied the ship; the sea began to go down by degrees; the celestial part of nature was more generous; away flew every cloud, out came the heavenly sky bluer and lovelier than ever they had seen it; the sun flamed in its centre. Nature, after three days' eclipse, was so lovely, it seemed a new heavens and a new earth. If there was an infidel on board who did not believe in God, now his soul felt Him, in spite of the poor little head; as for Dodd, who was naturally pious, he raised his eyes towards that lovely sky in heartfelt, though silent, gratitude to its Maker for saving the ship and cargo and her people's lives, not forgetting the private treasure he was carrying home to his dear wife and children.

With this thought, he naturally looked down; but missed the bladder that had lately protruded from his pocket; he clapped his hand to his pocket all in a flutter. The bottle was gone. In a fever of alarm and anxiety, but with good hopes of finding it, he searched the deck; he looked in every cranny, behind every coil of rope the sea had not carried away.

In vain.

The sea, acting on the buoyant bladder attached, had clearly torn the bottle out of his pocket, when it washed him against the mast. His treasure then must have been driven much farther; and how far? Who could tell?

It flashed on the poor man with fearful distinctness that it must either have been picked up by somebody in the ship ere now, or else carried out to sea.

Strict inquiry was made amongst the men.

No one had seen it.

The fruit of his toil and prudence, the treasure love,

not avarice, had twined with his heartstrings, was gone. In its defence he had defeated two pirates, each his superior in force; and now conquered the elements at their maddest. And in the very moment of that great victory — it was gone

CHAPTER XI.

IN the narrative of home events I skipped a little business, not quite colorless, but irrelevant to the love passages then on hand. It has, however, a connection with the curious events now converging to a point; so, with the reader's permission, I will place it in logical sequence, disregarding the order of time. The day Dr. Sampson splashed among the ducks, and one of them hid till dinner, the rest were seated at luncheon, when two patients were announced as waiting — Mr. and Mrs. Maxley. Sampson refused to see them, on this ground: "I will not feed and heal." But Mrs. Dodd interceded, and he yielded. "Well, then, show them in here; they are better cracters than pashints." On this, a stout fresh-colored woman, the picture of health, was ushered in, and courtesied all round. "Well, what is the matter now?" inquired Sampson, rather roughly. "Be seated, Mrs. Maxley," said Mrs. Dodd, benignly.

"I thank ye kindly, ma'am;" and she sat down. "Doctor, it is that pain."

"Well, don't say 'that pain.' Describe it. Now listen all of ye; ye're goen' to get a clinical lecture."

"If *you* please, ma'am," said the patient, "it takes me here under my left breest, and runs right to my elbow, it do; and bitter bad 'tis while it do last; chokes me, mostly; and I feel as I *must* die; and if I was to move hand or fut, I think I *should* die, that I do."

"Poor woman," said Mrs. Dodd.

"Oh, she isn't dead yet," cried Sampson cheerfully. "She'll sell addled eggs over all our tombstones; that is

to say, if she minds what I bid her. When was **your** last spasm?"

"No longer agone than yestereen, ma'am; and so I said to my master, 'The doctor he is due to-morrow, Sally up at Albion tells me; and'" —

"Whisht! whisht! who cares what you said to Jack, and Jill said to you? What was the cause?"

"The cause! What, of my pain? He says, 'What was the cause?'"

"Ay, the cause. Just obsairve, jintlemen," said Sampson, addressing imaginary students, "how startled they all are if a docker deviates from professional habits into sceince, and takes the right eend of the stick for once b' asking for the cause."

"The cause was the will of God, I do suppose," said Mrs. Maxley.

"Stuff!" shouted Sampson, angrily. "Then why come to mortal me to cure you?"

Alfred put in his oar. "He does not mean the 'final cause;' he means the 'proximate cause.'"

"My poor dear creature, I baint no Latiner," objected the patient.

Sampson fixed his eyes sternly on the slippery dame. "What I want to know is, had you been running up-stairs? or eating fast? or drinking fast? or grizzling over twopence? or quarrelling your husband? Come now, which was it?"

"Me quarrel with my man! We haven't never been disagreeable, not once, since we went to church a pair and came back a couple. I don't say but what we mayn't have had a word or two at odd times, as married folk will."

"And the last time you had a word or two — y' infairnal quibbler — was it just before your last spasm, eh?"

"Well, it might; I am not gainsaying that: but you

said quarrel, says you; 'quarrel' it were your word; and I defy all Barkton, gentle and simple, to say as how me and my master" —

"Whisht! whisht! Now, jintlemen, ye see what the great coming sceince — the sceince of healing — has to contind with. The dox are all fools; but one: and the pashints are lyres, ivery man Jack. N' listen me; y' have got a disease that you can't eradicate; but you may muzzle it for years, and die of something quite different when your time's up."

"Like enough, sir. If *you* please, ma'am, Dr. Stephenson do blame my indigestion for it."

"Dr. Stephenson's an ass."

"Dear heart, how cantankerous you be. To be sure, Dr. Osmond he says no: it's muscular, says he."

"Dr. Osmond's an ijjit. List *me*; you mustn't grizzle about money; you mustn't gobble, nor drink your beer too fast."

"You are wrong, doctor; I never drink no beer: it costs."

"Your catlap, then. And, above all, no grizzling! Go to church whenever you can without losing a farthing. It's medicinal; soothes the brain, and takes it off worldly cares. And have no words with your husband: or he'll outlive you; it's his only chance of getting the last word. Care killed a cat, a nanimal with eight lives more than a chatterbox. If you worry or excite your brain, little Maxley, you will cook your own goose — by a quick fire."

"Dear heart, these be unked sayings. Won't ye give me nothing to make me better, sir?"

"No; I never tinker; I go to the root: you may buy a vile of chlorofm and take a puff if you feel premonory symps: but a quiet brain is your only real chance. Now slope; and send the male screw."

“Anan?”

“Your husband.”

“That I will, sir. Your sarvant, doctor; your sarvant, ma’am; sarvant, all the company.”

Mrs. Dodd hoped the poor woman had nothing very serious the matter.

“Oh, it is a mortal disease,” replied Sampson, as cool as a cucumber. “She has got *angina pictoris*, or brist-pang, a disorder that admirably eximplifies the pretensions of midicine t’ a sceince.” And with this he dashed into monologue.

Maxley’s tall, gaunt form came slouching in, and traversed the floor, pounding it with heavy nailed boots. He seated himself gravely at Mrs. Dodd’s invitation, took a handkerchief out of his hat, wiped his face, and surveyed the company, grand and calm. In James Maxley all was ponderous; his head was huge; his mouth, when it fairly opened, revealed a chasm, and thence issued a voice naturally stentorian by its volume and native vigor. But, when the owner of this incarnate bassoon had a mind to say something sagacious, he sank at once from his habitual roar to a sound scarce above a whisper; a contrast mighty comical to hear, though on paper *nil*.

“Well, what is it, Maxley? Rheumatism again?”

“No, that it ain’t,” bellowed Maxley, defiantly.

“What then? Come, look sharp.”

“Well, then, doctor, I’ll tell you. I’m sore troubled — with — a — mouse.”

This malady, announced in the tone of a proclamation, and coming after so much solemn preparation, amused the party considerably, although parturient mountains had ere then produced muscipular abortions.

“A mouse!” inquired Sampson, disdainfully. “Where? up your sleeve? Don’t come to me: go t’ a sawbones

and have your arm cut off. I've seen 'em mutilate a pashint for as little."

Maxley said it was not up his sleeve, worse luck.

On this, Alfred hazarded a conjecture. Might it not have gone down his throat? "Took his potato-trap for the pantry-door. Ha! ha!"

"Ay, I hear ye, young man, a-laughing at your own sport," said Maxley, winking his eye; "but tain't the biggest mouth as catches the most: you sits yander fit to bust: but (with a roar like a lion) ye never offers *me* none on't, neither sup nor bit."

At this sudden turn of Mr. Maxley's wit, light and playful as a tap of the old English quarter-staff, they were a little staggered, all but Edward, who laughed and supplied him zealously with sandwiches.

"You're a gentleman, you are," said Maxley, looking full at Sampson and Alfred to point the contradistinction.

Having thus disposed of his satirists, he contemplated the sandwiches with an inquiring and philosophic eye. "Well," said he, after long and thoughtful inspection, "you gentlefolks won't die of hard work; your sarvants must cut the very meat to fit your mouths." And not to fall behind the gentry in a great and useful department of intelligence, he made precisely one mouthful of each sandwich.

Mrs. Dodd was secretly amazed, and taking care not to be noticed by Maxley, said confidentially, "*Monsieur avait bien raison; le souris a passé par là.*"

The plate cleared, and washed down with a tumbler of port, Maxley resumed, and informed the doctor that the mouse was at this moment in his garden eating his bulbs. "And I be come here to put an end to her, if I've any luck at all."

Sampson told him he needn't trouble. "Nature has put an end to her, as long as her body."

Mr. Maxley was puzzled for a moment; then opened his mouth from ear to ear in a guffaw that made the glasses ring. His humor was perverse: he was wit-proof and fun-proof; but at a feeble jest would sometimes roar like a lion inflated with laughing-gas. Laughed he ever so loud and long, he always ended abruptly and without gradation; his laugh was a clean spadeful dug out of merriment. He resumed his gravity and his theme, all in an instant: "White arsenic she won't look at, for I've tried her; but they tell me there's another sweetmeat come up: which they call it strick-nine."

"Hets! let the poor beastly alone. Life's as sweet tit as tus."

"If *you* was a *gardener*, you'd feel for the bulbs, not for the varmin," remonstrated Maxley, rather arrogantly.

"But bein' a man of sceince, I feel for th' higher organization. Mice are a part of nature as much as market-gardeners."

"So be stoats; and adders; and doctors."

Sampson appealed: "Jintlemen, here's a pretty pashint: reflects on our lairned profission, and it never costs him a guinea; for the dog never pays."

"Don't let my chaff choke ye, doctor. That warn't meant for *you* altogether. So if ye *have* got a little bit of that 'ere about you" —

"I'm not a rat-catcher, my man: I don't go with dith in my pocket, like the surgeons that carry a lancet. And if I had murder in both pockets, you shouldn't get any. Here's a greedy dog! got a thousand pounds in the bank; and grudges his healer a guinea, and his mouse a stand-up bite."

"Now, who have been a-telling you lies?" inquired Maxley, severely. "My missus, for a farthing. I'm not

a thousand-pound man; I'm a nine-hundred-pound man: and it's all safe at Hardie's:" here he went from his roar to his whisper, "I don't hold with Lannon banks; they be like my missus's eggs: all one outside, and the rotten ones only known by breaking. Well (loud) I *be* pretty close, I don't deny it; but (confidentially) my missus beats me. I look twice at a penny; but she looks twice at both sides of a halfpenny before she will let him go: and it's her being so close have raised all this here bobbery; and so I told her; says I, 'Missus, — if you would but leave an end of a dip, or a paring of cheese, about your cupboard, she would bide at home; but you hungers her so, you drives her a-field right on atop o' my roots.' — 'Oh,' says my missus, 'if *I* was to be as wasteful as *you* be, where should *we* be, come Christmas day? Every tub on its own bottom,' says she; 'man and wife did ought to keep theirselves *to* theirselves, she to the house, and I to the garden.' — 'So be it,' says I, 'and by the same toaken, don't let me catch them "Ns" in my garden again, or I'll spoil their clucking and scratching,' says I, 'for I'll twist their dalled necks; ye've got a yard,' says I, 'and a roost, and likewise a turnpike, you and your poultry; so bide at home the lot; and don't come a-scratching o' me;' and with that we had a ripput; and she took one of her pangs; and then I behoved to knock under; and that is allus the way if ye quarrel with women folk; they are sworn to get the better of ye by hook or by crook; now dooe give me a bit of that ere, to quiet this here, as eats me up by the roots and sets my missus and me by the ears."

"*Justum ac tenacem proposiit virum,*" whispered Alfred to Edward.

Sampson told him angrily to go to a certain great personage.

"Not afore my betters," whispered Mr. Maxley, smit with a sudden respect for etiquette. "Won't ye now?"

"I'll see ye hanged first, ye miserly old assassin."

"Then I have nothing to thank *you* for," roared Maxley, and made his adieus, ignoring with marked contempt the false physician who declined to doctor the foe of his domestic peace and crocuses.

"Quite a passage of arms," said Edward.

"Yes," said Mrs. Dodd, "and of bludgeons and things, rather than the polished rapier. What expressions to fall from two highly educated gentlemen! Slope — potato-trap — sawbones — catlap — *je n'en finirais pas.*"

She then let them know that she meditated a "dictionary of jargon:" in hopes that its bulk might strike terror into honest citizens, and excite an anti-jargon league to save the English language, now on the verge of dissolution.

Sampson was pleased with this threat. "Now, that is odd," said he; "why, I am compilin' a vocablary myself. I call 't th' ass-ass-ins' dickshinary; showing how, by the use of mealy-mouthed an' d'exotic phrases, knaves can lead fools by th' ear t' a vilent dith. F'r instance: if one was to say to John Bull, 'Now I'll cut a great gash in your arm and let your blood run till ye drop down senseless,' he'd take fright and say, 'Call another time!' So the professional ass-ass-in words it thus: 'I'll bleed you from a large orifice till th' occurrence of syncope.' All right, sis John: he's bled from a lar j'orifice, and dies three days after of th' assassin's knife hid in a sheath o' goose grease. But I'll blow the gaff with my dickshinary."

"Meantime, *there* is another contribution to mine," said Mrs. Dodd.

And they agreed in the gayety of their hearts to compare their rival lexicons.

CHAPTER XII.

THE subsiding sea was now a liquid paradise: its great pellucid braes and hillocks shone with the sparkle and the hues of all the jewels in an emperor's crown. Imagine — after three days of inky sea, and pitchy sky, and death's deep jaws snapping and barely missing — ten thousand great slopes of emerald, aquamarine, amethyst, and topaz, liquid, alive, and dancing jocundly beneath a gorgeous sun; and you will have a faint idea of what met the eyes and hearts of the rescued looking out of that battered, jagged ship, upon ocean smiling back to smiling heaven.

Yet one man felt no buoyancy, nor gush of joy. He leaned against a fragment of the broken bulwark, confused between the sweetness of life preserved, and the bitterness of treasure lost, his wife's and children's treasured treasure; benumbed at heart, and almost weary of the existence he had battled for so stoutly. He looked so moody, and answered so grimly and unlike himself, that they all held aloof from him; heavy heart among so many joyful ones, he was in true solitude; the body in a crowd, the soul alone. And he was sore as well as heavy; for of all the lubberly acts he had ever known, the way he had lost his dear ones' fortune seemed to him the worst.

A voice sounded in his ear: "Poor thing; she has foundered."

It was Fullalove scanning the horizon with his famous glass.

"Foundered? Who?" said Dodd; though he did

not care much who sank, who swam. Then he remembered the vessel, whose flashing guns had shed a human ray on the unearthly horror of the black hurricane. He looked all round.

Blank!

Ay, she had perished with all hands. The sea had swallowed her and spared him; ungrateful.

This turned his mind sharply. Suppose the *Agra* had gone down, the money would be lost as now, and his life into the bargain, a life dearer to all at home than millions of gold: he prayed inwardly to Heaven for gratitude, and goodness to feel its mercy. This softened him a little; and his heart swelled so, he wished he was a woman to cry over his children's loss for an hour, and then shake all off and go through his duty somehow; for now he was paralyzed, and all seemed ended. Next, nautical superstition fastened on him. That pocket-book of his was *Jonah*; it had to go, or else the ship; the moment it did go, the storm had broken as by magic.

Now, superstition is generally stronger than rational religion, whether they lie apart, or together in one mind; and this superstitious notion did something toward steeling the poor man. "Come," said he to himself, "my loss has saved all these poor souls on board this ship. So be it! Heaven's will be done! I must bustle, or else go mad."

He turned-to and worked like a horse; and with his own hands helped the men to rig parallel ropes — a substitute for bulwarks — till the perspiration ran down him.

Bayliss now reported the well nearly dry, and Dodd was about to bear up and make sail again, when one of the ship-boys, a little fellow with a bright eye and a chin like a monkey's, came up to him and said, —

"Please, captain!" then glared with awe at what he had done, and broke down.

“Well, my little man?” said Dodd, gently.

Thus encouraged, the boy gave a great gulp, and burst in a brogue: “Och, your arnr, sure there’s no rudder on her at all barrin the tiller.”

“What d’ye mean?”

“Don’t murrder me, your arnr, and I’ll tell ye. It’s meself looked over the starrn just now; and I seen there was no rudder at all, at all. Mille diaoul, sis I; ye old bitch, I’ll tell his arnr what y’are after, slipping your rudder like my granny’s list shoe, I will.”

Dodd ran to the helm and looked down; the brat was right: the blows which had so endangered the ship, had broken the rudder, and the sea had washed away more than half of it. The sight and the reflection made him faintish for a moment. Death passing so very close to a man sickens him *afterwards*; unless he has the luck to be brainless.

“What is your name, urchin?”

“Ned Murphy, sir.”

“Very well, Murphy, then you are a fine little fellow, and have wiped all our eyes in the ship; run and send the carpenter aft.”

“Ay, ay, sir.”

The carpenter came. Like most artisans, he was clever in a groove; take him out of that, and lo! a mule, a pig, an owl. He was not only unable to invent, but so stiffly disinclined; a makeshift rudder was clean out of his way; and, as his whole struggle was to get away from every suggestion Dodd made, back to groove aforesaid, the thing looked hopeless. Then Fullalove, who had stood by grinning, offered to make a bunkum rudder, provided the carpenter and mates were put under his orders. “But,” said he, “I must bargain they shall be disrated if they attempt to reason.” — “That is no more than fair,” said Dodd. The Yankee inventor demanded

a spare maincap, and cut away one end of the square piece, so as to make it fit the stern-post; through the circle of the cap he introduced a spare mizzen topmast; to this he seized a length of junk, another to that, another to that, and so on: to the outside junk he seized a spare maintop-gallant mast, and this conglomerate, being now nearly as broad as a rudder, he planked over all. The sea by this time was calm; he got the machine over the stern, and had the square end of the cap bolted to the stern-post. He had already fixed four spans of nine-inch hawser to the sides of the makeshift, two fastened to tackles, which led into the gunroom ports, and were bowsed taut—these kept the lower part of the makeshift close to the stern-post—and two, to which guys were now fixed and led through the aftermost ports on to the quarter-deck, where luff tackles were attached to them, by means of which the makeshift was to be worked as a rudder.

Some sail was now got on the ship, and she was found to steer very well. Dodd tried her on every tack; and at last ordered Sharpe to make all sail, and head for the Cape.

This electrified the first mate. The breeze was very faint but southerly, and the Mauritius under their lee. They could make it in a night, and there refit, and ship a new rudder. He suggested the danger of sailing sixteen hundred miles, steered by a Gimcrack, and implored Dodd to put into port. Dodd answered with a roughness and a certain wildness never seen in him before: "Danger, sir! There will be no more foul weather this voyage; Jonah is overboard." Sharpe stared an inquiry. "I tell you we sha'n't lower our topgallants once from this to the Cape: Jonah is overboard;" and he slapped his forehead in despair; then, stamping impatiently with his foot, told Sharpe his duty was to obey orders, not

discuss them. "Certainly, sir," said Sharpe, sullenly, and went out of the cabin with serious thoughts of communicating to the other mates an alarming suspicion about Dodd, that now, for the first time, crossed his mind. But long habit of discipline prevailed, and he made all sail on the ship, and bore away for the Cape, with a heavy heart: the sea was like a mill-pond, but in that he saw only its well-known treachery, to lead them on to this unparalleled act of madness; each sail he hoisted seemed one more agent of destruction rising at his own suicidal command.

Towards evening it became nearly dead calm. The sea heaved a little, but was waveless, glassy, and the color of a rose, incredibly brave and delicate.

The lookout reported pieces of wreck to windward. As the ship was making so little way, Dodd beat up towards them; he feared it was a British ship that had foundered in the storm, and thought it his duty to ascertain and carry the sad news home. In two tacks they got near enough to see with their glasses that the fragments belonged, not to a stranger, but to the *Agra* herself; there was one of her water-butts, and a broken mast with some rigging; and as more wreck was descried coming in at a little distance, Dodd kept the ship close to the wind to inspect it: on drifting near, it proved to be several pieces of the bulwark, and a mahogany table out of the cuddy. This sort of flotsam was not worth delaying the ship to pick it up; so Dodd made sail again, steering now south-east.

He had sailed about half a mile when the lookout hailed the deck again.

"A man in the water!"

"Whereabouts?"

"A short league on the weather quarter."

"Oh, we can't beat to windward for *him*," said Sharpe.
"He is dead long ago."

"Holds his head very high for a corpse," said the lookout.

"I'll soon know," cried Dodd. "Lower the gig: I'll go myself."

The gig was lowered, and six swift rowers pulled him to windward, while the ship kept on her course.

It is most unusual for a captain to leave the ship at sea on such petty errands; but Dodd half hoped the man might be alive. And he was so unhappy; and, like his daughter, who probably derived the trait from him, grasped instinctively at a chance of doing kindness to some poor fellow alive or dead. That would soothe his own sore, good heart.

When they had pulled about two miles, the sun was sinking into the horizon. "Give way, men," said Dodd, "or we shall not be able to see him." The men bent to their oars, and made the boat fly.

Presently the coxswain caught sight of an object bobbing on the water abeam.

"Why, that must be it," said he: "the lubber! to take it for a man's head. Why, it is nothing but a thundering old bladder speckled white."

"What?" cried Dodd, and fell a-trembling. "Steer for it! Give way!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

They soon came alongside the bladder, and the coxswain grabbed it. "Hallo! here's something lashed to it: a bottle!"

"Give it me!" gasped Dodd in a voice choked with agitation. "Give it me! Back to the ship! Fly! Fly! Cut her off, or she'll give us the slip *now*."

He never spoke a word more, but sat in a stupor of joyful wonder.

They soon caught the ship: he got into his cabin, he scarce knew how, broke the bottle to atoms, and found

the indomitable cash uninjured. With trembling hands he restored it to its old place in his bosom, and sewed it tighter than ever. Until he felt it there once more, he could hardly realize a stroke of good-fortune that seemed miraculous, though, in reality, it was less strange than the way he had lost it,¹ but, now laid bodily on his heart, it set his bosom on fire: oh, the bright eye, the bounding pulse, the buoyant foot, the reckless joy! He slapped Sharpe on the back a little vulgarly for him.

“Jonah is on board again, old fellow: look out for squalls.” He uttered this foreboding in a tone of triumph, and with a gay, elastic recklessness which harmonized so well with his makeshift rudder, that Sharpe groaned aloud, and wished himself under any captain in the world but this, and in any other ship. He looked round to make sure he was not watched, and then tapped his forehead significantly. This somewhat relieved him, and he did his duty smartly for a man going to the bottom with his eyes open.

But ill-luck is not to be bespoken any more than good. The *Agra's* seemed to have blown itself out: the wind veered to the south-west, and breathed steadily in that quarter for ten days. The top-gallant sails were never lowered nor shifted day nor night all that time, and not a single danger occurred between this and the Cape, except to a monkey, which I fear I must relate on account of its remoter consequences. One fine afternoon everybody was on deck amusing themselves as they could; Mrs. Beresford, to wit, was being flattered under the poop awning by Kenealy. The feud between her and Dodd continued, but under a false impression. The lady had one advantage over the gentler specimens of her sex: she was never deterred from a kind action by want of pluck, as they are. Pluck? Aquilina was

¹ The *Agra*, being much larger than the bottle, had drifted faster to leeward in the storm.

brimful of it. When she found Dodd was wounded, she cast her wrongs to the wind, and offered to go and nurse him. Her message came at an unlucky moment, and by an unlucky messenger: the surgeon said hastily, "I can't have him bothered." The stupid servant reported, "He can't be worried;" and Mrs. Beresford, thinking Dodd had a hand in this answer, was bitterly mortified, and with some reason. She would have forgiven him, though, if he had died, but, as he lived, she thought she had a right to detest him, and did, and showed her sentiments like a lady, by never speaking to him, nor looking at him, but ignoring him with frigid magnificence on his own quarter-deck.

Now, among the crew of this ship was a favorite goat, good-tempered, affectionate, playful, but a single vice counterbalanced all his virtues: he took a drop. A year or two ago some light-hearted tempter taught him to sip grog: he took to it kindly, and was now arrived at such a pitch, that at grog-time he used to butt his way in among the sailors, and get close to the canteen, and, by arrangement, an allowance was always served him. On imbibing it he passed, with quadrupedal rapidity, through three stages, the absurd, the choleric, the sleepy, and was never his own goat again until he awoke from the latter. Now Master Fred Beresford encountered him in the second stage of inebriety, and, being a rough playfellow, tapped his nose with a battledoor. Instantly Billy butted at him; mischievous Fred screamed and jumped on the bulwarks. Pot-angry Billy went at him there, whereupon the young gentleman, with an eldrich screech, and a comparative estimate of perils that smacked of inexperience, fled into the sea, at the very moment when his anxious mother was rushing to save him. She uttered a scream of agony, and would actually have followed him, but was held back uttering

shriek after shriek, that pierced every heart within hearing.

But Dodd saw the boy go overboard, and vaulted over the bulwark near the helm, roared in the very air, "Heave the ship to!" and went splash into the water about ten yards from the place: he was soon followed by Vespasian, and a boat was lowered as quickly as possible. Dodd caught sight of a broad straw hat on the top of a wave, swam lustily to it, and found Freddy inside: it was tied under his chin, and would have floated Goliath. Dodd turned to the ship, saw the poor mother with white face and arms outstretched as if she would fly at them, and held the urchin up high to her with a joyful "hurrah." The ship seemed alive and to hurrah in return with giant voice. The boat soon picked them up, and Dodd came up the side with Freddy in his arms, and placed him in his mother's with honest pride and deep parental sympathy.

Guess how she scolded and caressed her child all in a breath, and sobbed over him! For this no human pen has ever told, nor ever will. All I can just manage to convey is, that, after she had all but eaten the little torment, she suddenly dropped him, and made a great maternal rush at Dodd. She flung her arms round him, and kissed him eagerly, almost fiercely: then, carried away wild by mighty nature, she patted him all over in the strangest way, and kissed his waistcoat, his arms, his hands, and rained tears of joy and gratitude on them.

Dodd was quite overpowered: "No! no!" said he. "Don't, now! pray, don't! There, I know, my dear, I know: I'm a father." And he was very near whimpering himself, but recovered the man and the commander, and said soothingly, "There, there!" and handed her tenderly down to her cabin.

All this time he had actually forgotten the packet; but now a horrible fear came on him. He hurried to his own cabin and examined it. A little salt water had oozed through the bullet-hole and discolored the leather, but that was all. He breathed again.

"Thank Heaven I forgot all about it!" said he: "it would have made a cur of me."

La Beresford's petty irritation against Dodd melted at once before so great a thing: she longed to make friends with him, but for once felt timid. It struck her now all of a sudden that she had been misbehaving. However, she caught Dodd alone on the deck, and said to him softly, "I want so to end our quarrel."

"Our quarrel, madam!" said he; "why, I know of none; oh, about the light, eh? Well, you see the master of a ship is obliged to be a tyrant in some things."

"I make no complaint," said the lady hastily, and hung her head. "All I ask you is to forgive one who has behaved like a fool, without even the excuse of being one; and — will you give me your hand, sir?"

"Ay, and with all my heart," said Dodd warmly, enclosing the soft little hand in his honest grasp.

And with no more ado these two highflyers ended one of those little misunderstandings petty spirits nurse into a feud.

The ship being in port at the Cape, and two hundred hammers tapping at her, Dodd went ashore in search of Captain Robarts, and made the Agra over to him in the friendliest way, adding warmly that he had found every reason to be satisfied with the officers and the crew. To his surprise, Captain Robarts received all this ungraciously. "You ought to have remained on board, sir, and made me over the command on the quarter-deck." Dodd replied, politely, that it would have been more formal. "Suppose I return immediately, and man the

side for you, and then you board her, say in half an hour."

"I shall come when I like," replied Robarts, crustily.

"And when will you like to come?" inquired Dodd with imperturbable good-humor.

"Now: this moment; and I'll trouble you to come along with me."

"Certainly, sir."

They got a boat, and went out to the ship. On coming alongside, Dodd thought to meet his wishes by going first and receiving him, but the jealous, cross-grained fellow shoved roughly before him and led the way up the ship's side. Sharpe and the rest saluted him. He did not return the salute, but said hoarsely, "Turn the hands up to muster."

When they were all aft, he noticed one or two with their caps on. "Hats off, and be — to you!" cried he. "Do you know where you are? Do you know who you are looking at? If not, I'll show you. I'm here to restore discipline to this ship: so mind how you run athwart my hawse: don't you play with the bull, my men, or you'll find his horns — sharp. Pipe down! Now you, sir, bring me the log-book."

He ran his eye over it, and closed it contemptuously. "Pirates and hurricanes! *I* never fell in with pirates nor hurricanes: I have heard of a breeze, and a gale, but I never knew a seaman worth his salt say 'hurricane.' Get another log-book, Mr. Sharpe; put down that it begins this day at noon, and enter that Captain Robarts came on deck, found the ship in a miserable condition, took the command, mustered the officers and men, and stopped the ship's company's grog for a week, for receiving him with hats on."

Even Sharpe, that walking Obedience, was taken aback. "Stop — the ship's company's — grog — for a week, sir?"

“Yes, sir, for a week; and if you fling my orders back in my face instead of clapping on sail to execute them, I’ll have you towed ashore on a grating. Your name is Sharpe: well, my name is Damnedsharpe, and so you’ll find.”

In short, the new captain came down on the ship like a blight.

He was especially hard on Dodd: nothing that commander had done was right, nor, had he done the contrary, would that have been right; he was disgracefully behind time; and he ought to have put in to the Isle of France, which would have retarded him: his rope bulwarks were lubberly; his rudder a disgrace to navigation: he, Robarts, was not so green as to believe that any master had really sailed sixteen hundred miles with it, and, if he had, more shame for him. Briefly, a marine criticaster.

All this was spoken *at* Dodd, — a thing no male does unless he is an awful snob, — and grieved him, it was so unjust. He withdrew wounded to the little cabin he was entitled to as a passenger, and hugged his treasure for comfort. He patted the pocket-book, and said to it, “Never *you* mind. The greater Tartar he is, the less likely to sink you, or run you on a lee shore.”

With all his love of discipline, Robarts was not so fond of the ship as Dodd.

While his repairs were going on, he was generally ashore, and by this means missed a visit. Commodore Collier, one of the smartest sailors afloat, espied the Yankee makeshift from the quarter-deck of his vessel, the Salamanca, fifty guns. In ten minutes he was under the Agra’s stern inspecting it, then came on board, and was received in form by Sharpe and the other officers “Are you the master of this ship, sir?” he asked.

“No, commodore. I am the first mate: the captain is ashore.”

"I am sorry for it. I want to talk about his rudder."

"Oh, *he* had nothing to do with that," replied Sharpe eagerly: "that was our dear old captain: he is on board. Young gentleman, ask Captain Dodd to oblige me by coming on deck. Hy! and Mr. Fullalove, too."

"Young gentleman?" inquired Collier. "What the devil officer is that?"

"That is a name we give the middies; I don't know why."

"Nor I neither; ha! ha!"

Dodd and Fullalove came on deck, and Commodore Collier bestowed the highest compliments on the "make-shift." Dodd begged him to transfer them to the real inventor, and introduced Fullalove.

"Ay," said Collier, "I know you Yankees are very handy. I lost my rudder at sea once, and had to ship a makeshift: but it was a curs't complicated thing; not a patch upon yours, Mr. Fullalove. Yours is ingenious and *simple*. Ship has been in action, I see: pray how was that, if I may be so bold?"

"Pirates, commodore," said Sharpe. "We fell in with a brace of Portuguese devils, latine-rigged, and carried ten guns apiece, in the Straits of Gaspar: fought 'em from noon till sundown, riddled one, and ran down the other and sunk her in a moment. That was all *your* doing, captain; so don't try to shift it on other people; for we won't stand it."

"If he denies it, I won't believe him," said Collier: "for he has got it in his eye. Gentlemen, will you do me the honor to dine with me to-day on board the flag-ship?"

Dodd and Fullalove accepted. Sharpe declined, with regret, on the score of duty. And as the cocked hat went down the side, after saluting him politely, he could not help thinking to himself what a difference

between a real captain, who had something to be proud of, and his own unlicked cub of a skipper with the manners of a pilot-boat. He told Robarts the next day: Robarts said nothing, but his face seemed to turn greenish; and it embittered his hatred of Dodd the inoffensive.

It is droll and sad, but true, that Christendom is full of men in a hurry to hate. And a fruitful cause is jealousy. The schoolmen—or rather certain of the schoolmen, for nothing is much shallower than to speak of all those disputants as one school—defined woman: “a featherless biped vehemently addicted to jealousy.” Whether she is more featherless than the male, can be decided at a trifling expense of time, money, and reason: you have but to go to court. But as for envy and jealousy, I think it is pure, unobservant, antique cant which has fixed them on the female character distinctively. As a molehill to a mountain, is women’s jealousy to men’s. Agatha may have a host of virtues and graces, and yet her female acquaintance will not hate her, provided she has the moderation to abstain from being downright pretty. She may sing like an angel, paint like an angel, talk, write, nurse the sick,—all like an angel, and not rouse the devil in her fair sisters: so long as she does not dress like an angel. But, the minds of men being much larger than women’s, yet very little greater, they hang jealousy on a thousand pegs. Where there was no peg, I have seen them do with a pin.

Captain Robarts took a pin: ran it into his own heart, and hung that sordid passion on it.

He would get rid of all the Doddites before he sailed. He insulted Mr. Tickell, so that he left the service, and entered a mercantile house ashore: he made several of the best men desert: and the ship went to sea short of hands. This threw heavier work on the crew; and led

to many punishments, and a steady current of abuse. Sharpe became a mere machine, always obeying, never speaking: Grey was put under arrest for remonstrating against ungentlemanly language: and Bayliss, being at bottom of the same breed as Robarts, fell into his humor, and helped hector the petty officers and men. The crew, depressed and irritated, went through their duties pully-haully-wise. There was no song under the fore-castle in the first watch, and often no grog on the mess-table at one bell. Dodd never came on the quarter-deck without being reminded he was only a passenger, and the ship was now under naval discipline. "I was reared in the royal navy, sir," would Robarts say: "second lieutenant aboard the *Atalanta*: that is the school, sir, that is the only school that breeds seamen." Dodd bore scores of similar taunts as a Newfoundland puts up with a terrier in office: he seldom replied, and, when he did, in a few quiet dignified words that gave no handle.

Robarts, who bore the name of a lucky captain, had fair weather all the way to St. Helena.

The guard-ship at this island was the *Salamanca*. She had left the Cape a week before the *Agra*. Captain Robarts, with his characteristic good breeding, went to anchor in-shore of Her Majesty's ship: the wind failed at a critical moment, and a foul became inevitable: Collier was on his quarter-deck, and saw what would happen long before Robarts did; he gave the needful orders, and it was beautiful to see how in half a minute the frigate's guns were run in, her ports lowered, her yards toppled on end, and a spring carried out and hauled on.

The *Agra* struck abreast her own forechains on the *Salamanca*'s quarter.

(Pipe.) "Boarders away. Tomahawks! cut everything that holds!" was heard from the frigate's quarter-

deck. Rush came a boarding party on to the merchant ship, and hacked away without mercy all her lower rigging that held on to the frigate, signal halliards and all; others boomed her off with capstan bars, etc., and in two minutes the ships were clear. A lieutenant and boat's crew came for Robarts, and ordered him on board the *Salamanca*, and, to make sure of his coming, took him back with them. He found Commodore Collier standing stiff as a ramrod on his quarter-deck. "Are you the master of the *Agra*?" (His quick eye had recognized her in a moment.)

"I am, sir."

"Then she was commanded by a seaman, and is commanded by a lubber. Don't apply for your papers this week; for you won't get them. Good-morning. Take him away."

They returned Robarts to his ship; and a suppressed grin on a score of faces showed him the clear commanding tones of the commodore had reached his own deck. He soothed himself by stopping the men's grog and mast-heading three midshipmen that same afternoon.

The night before he weighed anchor, this disciplinarian was drinking very late in a low public-house. There was not much moon, and the officer in charge of the ship did not see the gig coming till it was nearly alongside: then all was done in a flurry.

"Hy! man the side! Lanterns there! Jump, you boys! or you'll catch pepper."

The boys did jump, and little Murphy, not knowing the surgeon had ordered the ports to be drooped, bounded over the bulwarks like an antelope, lighted on the midship port, which stood at this angle \sloperight , and glanced off into the ocean, lantern foremost; he made his little hole in the water within a yard of Captain Robarts. That dignity, though splashed, took no notice of so small an

incident as a gone ship-boy: and if Murphy had been wise and stayed with Nep., all had been well. But the poor urchin inadvertently came up again, and without the lantern. One of the gig's crew grabbed him by the hair, and prolonged his existence by an inconsiderate impulse.

"Where is the other lantern?" was Robarts's first word on reaching the deck: as if he didn't know.

"Gone overboard, sir, with the boy Murphy."

"Stand forward, you sir," growled Robarts.

Murphy stood forward, dripping and shivering with cold and fear.

"What d'ye mean by going overboard with the ship's lantern?"

"Och, your arnr, sure some unasy divil drooped the port; and the lantern and me we had no foothold at all, at all, and the lantern went into the say, bad luck to ut; and I went afther to try and save ut—for your arnr."

"Belay all that!" said Robarts; "do you think you can blarney me, you young monkey? Here, Bosen's mate, take a rope's-end and start him! Again! Warm him well! That's right."

As soon as the poor child's shrieks subsided into sobs, the disciplinarian gave him explanation, for ointment. "I can't have the company's stores expended this way."

"The force of discipline could no farther go," than to flog zeal for falling overboard: so, to avoid anticlimax in that port, Robarts weighed anchor at daybreak; and there was a south-westerly breeze waiting for this favorite of fortune, and carried him past the Azores. Off Ushant it was westerly, and veered to the nor'-west just before they sighted the Land's End; never was such a charming passage from the Cape. The sailor who had the luck to sight Old England first, nailed his starboard

shoe to the mainmast for contributions; and all hearts beat joyfully; none more than David Dodd's. His eye devoured the beloved shore: he hugged the treasure his own ill-luck had jeopardized — but Robarts had sailed it safe into British waters — and forgave the man his ill manners for his good luck.

Robarts steered in for the Lizard; but, when abreast the Point, kept well out again, and opened the Channel, and looked out for a pilot.

One was soon seen working out towards him, and the *Agra* brought to; the pilot descended from his lugger into his little boat, rowed alongside, and came on deck; a rough, tanned sailor, clad in flushing; and in build and manner might have passed for Robarts's twin brother.

"Now, then, you sir, what will you take this ship up to the Downs for?"

"Thirty pounds."

Robarts told him roughly he would not get thirty pounds out of *him*.

"Thyse and no higher, my Bo," answered the pilot, sturdily: he had been splicing the main brace, and would have answered an admiral.

Robarts swore at him lustily: pilot discharged a volley in return with admirable promptitude. Robarts retorted, the other rough customer rejoined, and soon all Billingsgate thundered on the *Agra's* quarter-deck. Finding, to his infinite disgust, his visitor as great a blackguard as himself, and not to be outsworn, Robarts ordered him to quit the ship on pain of being man-handled over the side.

"Oh, that is it, is it?" growled the other: "here's fill and be off then." He prudently bottled the rest of his rage till he got safe into his boat: then shook his fist at the *Agra*, and cursed her captain sky-high. "You see the fair wind, but you don't see the Channel fret

a-coming, ye greedy gander. Downs! You'll never see them: you have saved your — money, and lost your — ship, ye — lubber."

Robarts hurled back a sugar-plum or two of the same kind, and then ordered Bayliss to clap on all sail, and keep a mid-channel course through the night.

At four bells in the middle watch Sharpe, in charge of the ship, tapped at Robarts's door. "Blowing hard, sir, and the weather getting thickish."

"Wind fair still?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then call me if it blows any harder," grunted Robarts.

In two hours more, tap, tap, came Bayliss, in charge. "If we don't take sail in, they'll take themselves out."

"Furl to'gallen'sels, and call me if it gets any worse."

In another hour Bayliss was at him again. "Blowing a gale, sir, and a Channel fog on."

"Reef taupsels, and call me if it gets any worse."

At daybreak Dodd was on deck, and found the ship flying through a fog so thick, that her forecastle was invisible from the poop, and even her foremast loomed indistinct and looked distant. "You'll be foul of something or other, Sharpe," said he.

"What is that to you?" inquired a loud rough voice behind him. "I don't allow passengers to handle my ship."

"Then do pray handle her yourself, captain! Is this weather to go tearing happy-go-lucky up the Channel?"

"I mean to sail her without your advice, sir: and, being a seaman, I shall get all I can out of a fair wind."

"That is right, Captain Robarts; if you had but the British Channel all to yourself."

"Perhaps you will leave me my deck all to myself."

“I should be delighted: but my anxiety will not let me.” With this Dodd retired a few steps, and kept a keen lookout.

At noon, a lusty voice cried, “Land on the weather beam!”

All eyes were turned that way, and saw nothing.

Land in sight was reported to Captain Robarts.

Now that worthy was in reality getting secretly anxious: so he ran on deck crying, “Who saw it?”

“Captain Dodd, sir.”

“Ugh! Nobody else?”

Dodd came forward, and, with a respectful air, told him that, being on the lookout, he had seen the coast of the Isle of Wight in a momentary lift of the haze.

“Isle of Fiddlestick!” was the polite reply; “Isle of Wight is eighty miles astern by now.”

Dodd answered firmly that he was well acquainted with every outline in the Channel, and the land he had seen was St. Katharine’s Point.

Robarts deigned no reply, but had the log heaved: it showed the vessel to be running twelve knots an hour. He then went to his cabin and consulted his chart; and, having worked his problem, came hastily on deck, and went from rashness to wonderful caution. “Turn the hands out, and heave the ship to!”

The manœuvre was executed gradually and ably, and scarce a bucketful of water shipped. “Furl taupsels and set the main trysail! There, Mr. Dodd, so much for you and your Isle of Wight. The land you saw was Dungeness, and *you* would have run on into the North Sea, I’ll be bound.”

When a man, habitually calm, turns anxious, he becomes more irritable: and the mixture of timidity and rashness he saw in Robarts made Dodd very anxious.

He replied angrily, "At all events I should not make a foul wind out of a fair one by heaving to; and if I did, I would heave to on the right tack."

At this sudden facer — one, too, from a patient man — Robarts staggered a moment. He recovered, and, with an oath, ordered Dodd to go below, or he would have him chucked into the hold.

"Come, don't be an ass, Robarts," said Dodd, contemptuously. Then, lowering his voice to a whisper, "Don't you know the men only want such an order as that, to chuck you into the sea?"

Robarts trembled. "Oh, if you mean to head a mutiny" —

"Heaven forbid, sir! But I won't leave the deck in dirty weather like this, till the captain knows where he is."

Towards sunset it got clearer, and they drifted past a revenue cutter, who was lying to with her head to the northward. She hoisted no end of signals, but they understood none of them; and her captain gesticulated wildly on her deck.

"What is that Fantoccini dancing at?" inquired Captain Robarts, brutally.

"To see a first-class ship drift to leeward in a narrow sea, with a fair wind," said Dodd, bitterly.

At night it blew hard, and the sea ran high and irregular. The ship began to be uneasy, and Robarts very properly ordered the top-gallant and royal yards to be sent down on deck. Dodd would have had them down twelve hours ago. The mate gave the order: no one moved. The mate went forward angry. He came back pale. The men refused to go aloft; they would not risk their lives for Captain Robarts.

The officers all assembled and went forward: they promised and threatened; but all in vain. The crew

stood sullen together, as if to back one another, and put forward a spokesman to say that "there was not one of them the captain hadn't started, and stopped his grog a dozen times: he had made the ship hell to them; and now her masts and yards and hull might go there along with her skipper, for them."

Robarts received this tidings in sullen silence. "Don't tell that Dodd, whatever you do," said he. "They will come round now they have had their growl: they are too near home to shy away their pay."

Robarts had not sufficient insight into character to know that Dodd would instantly have sided with him against mutiny.

But at this juncture the ex-captain of the *Agra* was down in the cabin with his fellow-passengers, preparing a general remonstrance: he had a chart before him, and a pair of compasses in his hand.

"St. Katharine's Point lay about eight miles to windward at noon; and we have been drifting south and east this twelve hours, through lying to on the starboard tack; and besides, the ship has been coned as slovenly as she is sailed. I've seen her allowed to break off a dozen times, and gather more leeway: ah! here *is* Captain Robarts. Captain, you saw the rate we passed the revenue cutter. That vessel was nearly stationary; so what we passed her at, was our own rate of drifting, and our least rate; putting all this together, we can't be many miles from the French coast, and, unless we look sharp and beat to windward, I pronounce the ship in danger."

A horse-laugh greeted this conclusion.

"We are nearer Yarmouth sands than France, I promise you: and nothing under our lee nearer than Rotterdam."

A loud cry from the deck above: "A LIGHT ON THE LEE BOW!"

"There!" cried Robarts, with an oath: "foul of *her*

next! through me listening to your nonsense." He ran upon deck, and shouted through his trumpet, "All hands wear ship!"

The crew, who had heard the previous cry, obeyed orders in the presence of an immediate danger; and perhaps their growl had really relieved their ill-humor. Robarts with delight saw them come tumbling up, and gave his orders lustily: "Brail up the trysel! Up with the helm! in with the weather main brace! square the after-yards!"

The ship's bow turned from the wind, and, as soon as she got way on her, Robarts ran below again, and entered the cabin triumphant.

"That is all right: and now, Captain Dodd, a word with you: you will either retire at once to your cabin, or will cease to breed disaffection in my crew, and groundless alarm in my passengers, by instilling your own childish, ignorant fears. The ship has been under-logged a hundred miles, sir, and but for my caution in lying to for clear weather we should be groping among the Fern Isl—"

CRASH!

An unheard-of shock threw the speaker and all the rest in a mass on the floor, smashed every lamp, put out every light; and, with a fierce grating noise, the ship was hard and fast on the French coast, with her stern to the sea.

One awful moment of silence; then amid shrieks of agony, the sea struck her like a rolling rock, solid to crush, liquid to drown: and the comb of a wave smashed the cabin-windows and rushed in among them as they floundered on the floor, and wetted and chilled them to the marrow; a voice in the dark cried, "O God! we are dead men."

CHAPTER XIII.

“ON deck for your lives!” cried Dodd, forgetting in that awful moment he was not the captain; and drove them all up, Robarts included, and caught hold of Mrs. Beresford and Freddy at their cabin-door and half carried them with him. Just as they got on deck the third wave, a high one, struck the ship and lifted her bodily up, canted her round, and dashed her down again some yards to leeward, throwing them down on the hard and streaming deck.

At this tremendous shock the ship seemed a live thing shrieking and wailing, as well as quivering with the blow.

But one voice dissented loudly from the general dismay. “All right, men,” cried Dodd, firm and trumpet-like. “She is broadside on now. Captain Robarts, look alive, sir! Speak to the men! don’t go to sleep!”

Robarts was in a lethargy of fear. At this appeal he started into a fury of ephemeral courage: “Stick to the ship,” he yelled; “there is no danger if you stick to the ship,” and with this snatched a life buoy, and hurled himself into the sea.

Dodd caught up the trumpet that fell from his hand, and roared, “I command this ship. Officers, come round me! Men, to your quarters! Come, bear a hand here, and fire a gun! That will show us where we are, and let the Frenchmen know.”

The carronade was fired, and its momentary flash revealed that the ship was ashore in a little bay; the

land abeam was low and some eighty yards off; but there was something black and rugged nearer the ship's stern.

Their situation was awful. To windward huge black waves rose like tremendous ruins, and came rolling, fringed with devouring fire; and each wave, as it charged them, curled up to an incredible height and dashed down on the doomed ship—solid to crush, liquid to drown—with a ponderous stroke that made the poor souls stagger; and sent a sheet of water so clean over her that part fell to leeward, and only part came down on deck, foretaste of a watery death; and each of these fearful blows drove the groaning, trembling vessel farther on the sand, bumping her along as if she had been but a skiff.

Now it was men showed their inner selves.

Seeing death so near on one hand, and a chance of escape on the other, seven men proved unable to resist the two great passions of fear and hope on a scale so gigantic, and side by side. Bayliss, a midshipman, and five sailors, stole the only available boat and lowered her.

She was swamped in a moment.

Many of the crew got to the rum, and stupefied themselves to their destruction.

Others rallied round their old captain, and recovered their native courage at the brave and hopeful bearing he wore over a heart full of anguish. He worked like a horse, encouraging, commanding, doing: he loaded a carronade with a pound of powder and a coil of rope, with an iron bar attached to a cable, and shot the rope and bar ashore.

A gun was now fired from the guard-house, whose light Robarts had taken for a ship. But, no light being shown any nearer on the coast, and the ship expected every minute to go to pieces, Dodd asked if any one would try to swim ashore with a line made fast to a hawser on board.

A sailor offered to go if any other man would risk his life along with him. Instantly Fullalove stripped, and Vespasian next.

"Two is enough on such a desperate errand," said Dodd, with a groan. But now emulation was up, and neither Briton, Yankee, nor negro would give way; a line was made fast to the sailor's waist, and he was lowered to leeward; his venturesome rivals followed. The sea swallowed those three heroes like crumbs; and small was the hope of life for them.

The three heroes being first-rate swimmers and divers, and going with the tide, soon neared the shore on the ship's lee quarter; but a sight of it was enough; to attempt to land on that rock with such a sea on, was to get their skulls smashed like eggshells in a moment. They had to coast it, looking out for a soft place.

They found one, and tried to land; but so irresistible was the suction of the retiring wave, that, whenever they got foot on the sand, and tried to run, they were wrenched out to sea again, and pounded black and blue and breathless by the curling breaker they met coming in.

After a score of vain efforts, the negro, throwing himself on his back, went in with a high wave, and, on touching the sand, turned, dug all his ten claws into it, clenched his teeth, and scrambled like a cat at a wall: having more power in his toes than the Europeans, and luckily getting one hand on a firm stone, his prodigious strength just enabled him to stick fast while the wave went back; and then, seizing the moment, he tore himself ashore, but bleeding and bruised all over, and with a tooth actually broken by clenching in the convulsive struggle.

He found some natives dancing about in violent agitation with a rope, but afraid to go in and help him; and no wonder, not being sea-gulls. By the light of their

lanterns, he saw Fullalove washing in and out like a log. He seized one end of the rope, dashed in and grabbed his friend, and they were hauled ashore together, both breathless, and Fullalove speechless.

The negro looked round for the sailor, but could not see him. Soon, however, there was a cry from some more natives about fifty yards off, and lanterns held up; away he dashed with the rope, just in time to see Jack make a last gallant attempt to land. It ended in his being flung up like a straw into the air on the very crest of a wave fifteen feet high, and out to sea with his arms whirling, and a death-shriek which was echoed by every woman within hearing.

In dashed Vespasian with the rope, and gripped the drowning man's long hair with his teeth: then jerked the rope, and they were both pulled ashore with infinite difficulty. The good-natured Frenchmen gave them all three lots of *vivats* and brandy and pats on the back, and carried the line for them to a flagstaff on the rocks nearer the stern of the ship.

The ship began to show the first signs of breaking up: hammered to death by the sea, she discharged the oakum from her opening seams, and her decks began to gape and grin fore and aft. Corpses of drunken sailors drowned between decks now floated up amidships, and washed and rolled about among the survivors' feet. These, seeing no hope, went about making up all quarrels, and shaking hands in token of a Christian end. One or two came to Dodd with their hands out.

"Avast, ye lubbers!" said he angrily; "do you think I have time for nonsense? Folksel ahoy! axes, and cut the weather shrouds!"

It was done; the foremast went by the board directly, and fell to leeward: a few blows of the axe from Dodd's own hand sent the mainmast after it.

The Agra rose a streak ; and the next wave carried her a little farther in shore.

And now the man in charge of the hawser reported with joy that there was a strain on it.

This gave those on board a hope of life. Dodd bustled and had the hawser carefully paid out by two men, while he himself secured the other end in the mizzen-top ; he had left that mast standing on purpose.

There was no fog here ; but great heavy black clouds flying about with amazing swiftness extinguished the moon at intervals : at others she glimmered through a dull mist in which she was veiled, and gave the poor souls on the Agra a dim peep of the frail and narrow bridge they must pass to live. A thing like a black snake went down from the mizzen-top, bellying towards the yawning sea, and soon lost to sight : it was seen rising again among some lanterns on the rock ashore : but what became of it in the middle ? The darkness seemed to cut it in two ; the sea to swallow it. Yet, to get from a ship going to pieces under them, the sailors precipitated themselves eagerly on that black thread bellying to the sea and flickering in the wind. They went down it, one after another, and anxious eyes straining after them saw them no more : but this was seen, that scarce one in three emerged into the lights ashore.

Then Dodd got an axe, and stood in the top, and threatened to brain the first man who attempted to go on the rope.

“ We must make it taut first,” said he ; “ bear a hand here with a tackle.”

Even while this was being done, the other rope, whose end he had fired ashore, was seen moving to windward. The natives, it seems, had found it, half buried in sand.

Dodd unlashd the end from the bulwarks and carried it into the top, and made it fast : and soon there were two

black snakes dipping shorewards and waving in the air side by side.

The sailors scrambled for a place, and some of them were lost by their own rashness. Kenealy waited coolly, and went by himself.

Finally, Dodd was left in the ship with Mr. Sharpe and the women, and little Murphy, and Ramgolam, whom Robarts had liberated to show his contempt of Dodd.

He now advised Mrs. Beresford to be lashed to Sharpe and himself, and venture the passage; but she screamed and clung to him, and said, "I dare not, oh, I dare not!"

"Then I must lash you to a spar," said he, "for she can't last much longer." He ordered Sharpe ashore. Sharpe shook hands with him; and went on the rope with tears in his eyes.

Dodd went hard to work, lashed Mrs. Beresford to a piece of broken water-butt: filled Fred's pockets with corks and sewed them up (you never caught Dodd without a needle; only, unlike the women's, it was always kept threaded). Mrs. Beresford threw her arms round his neck and kissed him wildly: a way women have in mortal peril: it is but their homage to courage. "All right!" said Dodd, interpreting it as an appeal to his protection, and affecting cheerfulness: "we'll get ashore together on the poop awning, or somehow; never you fear. I'd give a thousand pounds to know when high water is."

At this moment, with a report like a cannon, the lower decks burst fore and aft: another still louder, and the Agra's back broke. She parted amidships with a fearful yawn, and the waves went toppling and curling clean through her.

At this appalling sound and sight, the few creatures left on the poop cowered screaming and clinging at Dodd's knees, and fought for a bit of him.

Yes, as a flood brings incongruous animals together on some little isle, in brotherhood of fear—creatures who never met before without one eating the other; and there they cuddle—so the thief Ramgolam clung to the man he had tried to rob; the Hindoo ayah and the English maid hustled their mistress, the haughty Mrs. Beresford, and were hustled by her, for a bit of this human pillar; and little Murphy and Fred Beresford wriggled in at him where they could: and the poor goat crept into the quivering mass trembling like an aspen, and not a butt left either in his head or his heart. Dodd stood in the middle of these tremblers, a rock of manhood: and when he was silent and they heard only the voice of the waves, they despaired; and, whenever he spoke, they started at the astounding calmness of his voice and words: and life sounded possible.

“Come,” said he, “this won’t do any longer. All hands into the mizzen-top!”

He helped them all up, and stood on the ratlines himself; and, if you will believe me, the poor goat wailed like a child below. He found in that new terror and anguish a voice goat was never heard to speak in before. But they had to leave him on deck: no help for it. Dodd advised Mrs. Beresford once more to attempt the rope; she declined. “I dare not! I dare not!” she cried, but she begged Dodd hard to go on it and save himself.

It was a strong temptation: he clutched the treasure in his bosom, and one sob burst from the strong man.

That sob was but the tax paid by nature: for pride, humanity, and manhood stood stanch in spite of it. “No, no, I can’t,” said he: “I mustn’t. Don’t tempt me to leave you in this plight, and be a cur! Live or die, I must be the last man on her. Here’s something coming out to us, the Lord in heaven be praised!”

A bright light was seen moving down the black line

that held them to the shore ; it descended slowly within a foot of the billows, and lighting them up showed their fearful proximity to the rope in mid passage : they had washed off many a poor fellow at that part.

“Look at that! Thank Heaven you did not try it!” said Dodd to Mrs. Beresford.

At this moment a higher wave than usual swallowed up the light : there was a loud cry of dismay from the shore, and a wail of despair from the ship.

No! not lost after all! The light emerged : and mounted, and mounted towards the ship.

It came near and showed the black shiny body of Vespasian with very little on but a handkerchief and a lantern, the former round his waist, and the latter lashed to his back : he arrived with a “Yah! yah!” and showed his white teeth in a grin.

Mrs. Beresford clutched his shoulder, and whimpered, “O Mr. Black!”

“Iss, missy, dis child bring good news. Cap’n! Massah Fullalove send you his congratulations, and the compliments of the season; and take the liberty to observe the tide am turned in twenty minutes.”

The good news thus quaintly announced, caused an outburst of joy from Dodd, and, sailor-like, he insisted on all hands joining in a cheer. The shore re-echoed it directly. And this encouraged the forlorn band still more; to hear other hearts beating for them so near. Even the intervening waves could not quite annul the sustaining power of sympathy.

At this moment came the first faint streaks of welcome dawn, and revealed their situation more fully.

The vessel lay on the edge of a sand-bank. She was clean in two, the stern lying somewhat higher than the stem. The sea rolled through her amidships six feet broad, frightful to look at; and made a clean breach over

her forward, all except the bowsprit, to the end of which three poor sailors were now discovered to be clinging. The after part of the poop was out of water, and in a corner of it the goat crouched like a rabbit: four dead bodies washed about beneath the party trembling in the mizzen-top, and one had got jammed in the wheel, face uppermost, and glared up at them, gazing terror-stricken down.

No sign of the tide turning yet: and much reason to fear it would turn too late for them, and the poor fellows shivering on the bowsprit.

These fears were well founded.

A huge sea rolled in, and turned the fore part of the vessel half over, buried the bowsprit, and washed the men off into the breakers.

Mrs. Beresford sank down and prayed, holding *Vespasian* by the knee.

Fortunately, as in that vessel wrecked long syne on *Melita*, "the hind part of the ship stuck fast and remained immovable."

But for how long?

Each wave now struck the ship's weather quarter with a sound like a cannon fired in a church, and sent the water clean into the mizzen-top. It hit them like strokes of a whip. They were drenched to the skin, chilled to the bone, and frozen to the heart with fear. They made acquaintance that hour with death. Ay, death itself has no bitterness that forlorn cluster did not feel: only the insensibility that ends that bitterness was wanting.

Now the sea, you must know, was literally strewed with things out of the *Agra*: masts, rigging, furniture, tea-chests, bundles of canes, chairs, tables; but, of all this jetsam, *Dodd's* eye had been for some little time fixed on one object: a live sailor drifting ashore on a great wooden case: it struck him after awhile that the man

made very little way; and at last seemed to go up and down in one place. By and by he saw him nearer and nearer, and recognized him. It was one of the three washed off the bowsprit.

He cried joyfully, "The tide has turned! here's Thompson coming out to sea."

Then there ensued a dialogue, incredible to landsmen, between these two sailors, the captain of the ship and the captain of the foretop; one perched on a stationary fragment of that vessel, the other drifting on a pianoforte; and both bawling at one another across the jaws of death.

"Thompson ahoy!"

"Hal-lo!"

"Whither bound?"

"Going out with the tide, and be d——d to me."

"What, can't ye swim?"

"Like a brass figure-head. It's all over with poor Jack, sir."

"All over? Don't tell me! Look out now as you drift under our stern, and we'll lower you the four-inch hawser."

"Lord bless you, sir; do, pray!" cried Thompson, losing his recklessness with the chance of life.

By this time the shore was black with people, and a boat was brought down to the beach, but to attempt to launch it was to be sucked out to sea.

At present all eyes were fixed on Thompson drifting to destruction.

Dodd cut the four-inch hawser, and Vespasian, on deck, lowered it with a line, so that Thompson presently drifted right athwart it: "All right, sir!" said he, grasping it: and amidst thundering acclamations was drawn to land full of salt water and all but insensible. The piano landed at Dunkirk, three weeks later.

In the bustle of this good and smart action the tide retired perceptibly.

By and by the sea struck lower and with less weight.

At nine P.M. Dodd took his little party down on deck again, being now the safest place; for the mast might go.

It was a sad scene: the deck was now dry, and the dead bodies lay quiet around them, with glassy eyes: and, grotesquely horrible, the long hair of two or three was stiff and crystallized with the saltpetre in the ship.

Mrs. Beresford clung to Vespasian: she held his bare black shoulder with one white and jewelled hand, and his wrist with the other, tight. "O Mr. Black," said she, "how brave you are! It is incredible. Why you came back. I must feel a brave man with both my hands, or I shall die. Your skin is nice and soft too. I shall never outlive this dreadful day."

And, now that the water was too low to wash them off the hawser, several of the ship's company came back to the ship to help the women down.

By noon the Agra's deck was thirty feet from the sand. The rescued ones wanted to break their legs and necks: but Dodd would not permit even that. He superintended the whole manœuvre, and lowered, first the dead, then the living, not omitting the poor goat, who was motionless and limp with fright.

When they were all safe on the sand, Dodd stood alone upon the poop a minute, cheered by all the sailors, French and English, ashore: then slid down a rope and rejoined his companions.

To their infinite surprise, the undaunted one was found to be snivelling.

"Oh, dear, what is the matter?" said Mrs. Beresford, tenderly.

"The poor Agra, ma'am! She was such a beautiful sea-boat: and just look at her now! Never sail again! never! never! She was a little crank in beating, I can't deny it: but how she did fly with the wind abaft! She

sank a pirate in the straits, and weathered a hurricane off the Mauritius; and after all for a lubber to go and lay her bones ashore in a fair wind: poor dear beauty!"

He maundered thus, and kept turning back to look at the wreck, till he happened to lay his hand on his breast. He stopped in the middle of his ridiculous lament, wore a look of self-reproach, and cast his eyes upward in heartfelt gratitude.

The companions of so many adventures dispersed.

A hospitable mayoress entertained Mrs. Beresford and suite, and she took to her bed; for she fell seriously ill as soon as ever she could do it with impunity.

Colonel Kenealy went off to Paris. "I'll gain that any way by being wrecked," said he.

If there be a lover of quadrupeds here, let him know that Billy's weakness proved his strength. Being brandied by a good-natured French sailor, he winked his eye; being brandied greatly, he staggered up, and butted his benefactor, like a man.

Fullalove had dry clothes and a blazing fire ready for Dodd at a little rude *auberge*. He sat over it and dried a few bank-notes he had loose about him, and examined his greater treasure, his children's. The pocket-book was much stained, but no harm whatever done to the contents.

In the midst of this employment the shadow of an enormous head was projected right upon his treasure.

Turning with a start he saw a face at the window, one of those vile mugs which are found to perfection amongst the canaille of the French nation; bloated, blear-eyed, grizzly, and wild-beast like. The ugly thing, on being confronted, passed slowly out of the sun, and Dodd thought no more of it.

The owner of this sinister visage was André Thibout, of whom it might be said, like face like life; for he was

one of those ill-omened creatures who feed upon the misfortunes of their kind, and stand on shore in foul weather hoping the worst, instead of praying for the best: briefly, a wrecker. He and his comrade, Jacques Moinard, had heard the Agra's gun fired, and come down to batten on the wreck; but lo! at the turn of the tide, there were gendarmes and soldiers lining the beach, and the bayonet interposed between theft and misfortune. So now the desperate pair were prowling about like hungry, baffled wolves, curses on their lips, and rage at their hearts.

Dodd was extremely anxious to get to Barkington before the news of the wreck; for, otherwise, he knew his wife and children would suffer a year's agony in a single day. The only chance he saw was to get to Boulogne in time to catch the Nancy sailing packet; for it was her day. But then Boulogne was eight leagues distant, and there was no public conveyance going. Fullalove, entering heartily into his feelings, was gone to look for horses to hire, aided by the British consul. The black hero was up-stairs clearing out with a pin two holes that had fallen into decay for want of use. These holes were in his ears.

And now, worn out by anxiety and hard work, Dodd began to nod in his chair by the fire.

He had not been long asleep when the hideous face of Thibout reappeared at the window, and watched him. Presently a low whistle was uttered outside, and soon the two ruffians entered the room, and, finding the landlady there as well as Dodd, called for a little glass apiece of absinthe. While drinking it they cast furtive glances towards Dodd, and waited till she should go about her business, and leave them alone with him.

But the good woman surprised their looks, and knowing the character of the men, poured out a cup of coffee from a great metal reservoir by the fire, and waked Dodd without ceremony. "*Voici votre café, monsieur!*" making believe he had ordered it.

"*Merci, madame!*" replied he, for his wife had taught him a little French.

"One may sleep *mal à propos*," muttered the woman in his ear. "My man is at the fair, and there are people here who are not worth any great things."

Dodd rubbed his eyes and saw those two foul faces at the end of the kitchen; for such it was, though called *salle à manger*. "Humph!" said he, and instinctively buttoned his coat.

At that Thibout touched Moinard's knee under the table.

Fullalove came in soon after, to say he had got two horses, and they would be here in a quarter of an hour.

"Well, but Vespasian, how is he to go?" inquired Dodd.

"Oh! we'll send him on ahead, and then ride and tie."

"No, no," said Dodd, "I'll go ahead. That will shake me up. I think I should tumble off a horse, I'm so dead sleepy."

Accordingly, he started to walk on the road to Boulogne.

He had not been gone three minutes when Moinard sauntered out.

Moinard had not been gone two minutes when Thibout strolled out.

Moinard kept Dodd in sight, and Thibout kept Moinard.

The horses were brought soon after; but unfortunately the pair did not start immediately, though, had they known it, every moment was precious. They wasted time in argument. Vespasian had come down with a diamond ring in one ear, and a ruby in the other. Fullalove saw this retrograde step, and said grimly, "Have you washed but half your face, or is this a return to savagery?"

Vespasian wore an air of offended dignity. "No, sar; these yar decorations come off a lady ob i civilisation.



THE MEN WERE UPON HIM.

Missy Beresford donated 'em me. Says she, 'Massah Black,'—yah! yah! She always nicknominates dis child Massa Black,—'while I was praying Goramighty for self and pickaninny, I seen you out of one corner of my eye admirationing my rings; den just you take 'em,' says dat ar aristocracy; 'for I don't admirationize 'em none; I've been shipwrecked.' So I took 'em wid incredible condescension; and dat ar beautiful lady says to me, 'Oh, get along wid your nonsense about colored skins! I have inspectionated your conduct, Massa Black, and likewise your performances on the slack rope,' says she, 'in time of shipwreck; and darn me,' says she, 'but you are a man, you are.'—'No, missy,' says I, superciliously, 'dis child am not a man, if you please, but a colored gemman.'" He added, he had put them in his ears because the biggest would not go on his little finger.

Fullalove groaned. "And, of course, the next thing, you'll ring your snout like a pig or a Patagonian; there, come along, ye darn'd—*anomaly!*"

He was going to say "cuss," but, remembering his pupil's late heroic conduct, softened it down to *anomaly*.

But *Vespasian* always measured the force of words by their length or obscurity. "*Anomaly*" cut him to the heart. He rode off in moody silence and dejection, asking himself sorrowfully what he had done that such a mountain of vituperation should fall on him. "*Anomaly!*"

They cantered along in silence; for Fullalove was digesting this new trait in his pupil, and asking himself could he train it out, or must he cross it out. Just outside the town they met Captain Robarts walking in. He had landed three miles off down the coast. "Hallo!" said Fullalove.

"I suppose you thought I was drowned?" said Robarts, spitefully; "but you see I'm alive still."

Fullalove replied, "Well, captain, that is only one mistake more you've made, I reckon."

About two English miles from the town, they came to a long, straight slope up and down, where they could see a league before them, and there they caught sight of David Dodd's tall figure mounting the opposite rise.

Behind him at some little distance were two men going the same way, but on the grass by the roadside, whereas David was on the middle of the road.

"He walks well for Jacky Tar," said Fullalove.

"Iss, sar," said Vespasian, sulkily; "but dis 'analogy' tink he not walk so fast as those two behind him, cos they catch him up."

Now Vespasian had hardly uttered these words when a thing occurred so sudden and alarming, that the speaker's eyes protruded, and he was dumfounded a moment; the next a loud cry burst from both him and his companion at once; and they lashed their horses to the gallop, and went tearing down the hill in a fury of rage and apprehension.

Mr. Fullalove was right, I think; a sailor is seldom a smart walker; but Dodd was a cricketer, you know, as well. He swung along at a good pace, and in high spirits. He had lost nothing but a few clothes and a quadrant and a chronometer. It was a cheap wreck to him and a joyful one; for peril past is present delight. He had saved his life, and what he valued more, his children's money. Never was that dear companion of his perils so precious to him as now. One might almost fancy that, by some strange sympathy, he felt the immediate happiness of his daughter depended on it. Many in my day believe that human minds can thus communicate, overleaping material distances. Not knowing, I can't say. However, no such solution is really needed here. All the members of an united and loving family feel together and work together,

without specific concert, though hemispheres lie between; it is one of the beautiful traits of true family affection. Now the Dodds, father, mother, sister, brother, were more one in heart and love than any other family I ever saw. Woe to them if they had not!

David, then, walked towards Boulogne that afternoon a happy man. Already he tasted by anticipation the warm caresses of his wife and children, and saw himself seated at the hearth with those beloved ones clustering close round him. How would he tell them its adventures, its dangers from pirates, its loss at sea, its recovery, its wreck, its coming ashore dry as a bone; and conclude by taking it out of his bosom, and dropping it in his wife's lap with cheer boys cheer!

Trudging on in this delightful reverie, his ear detected a pit-pat at some distance behind him. He looked round with very slight curiosity, and saw two men coming up; even in that hasty glance he recognized the foul face of André Thibout, a face not to be forgotten in a day. I don't know how it was, but he saw in a moment that face was after him to rob him, and he naturally enough concluded it was their object.

And he was without a weapon, and they were doubtless armed. Indeed, Thibout was swinging a heavy cudgel.

Poor Dodd's mind went into a whirl, and his body into a cold sweat. In such moments men live a year. To gain a little time he walked swiftly on, pretending not to have noticed them; but oh! his eyes roved wildly to each side of the road for a chance of escape. He saw none. To his right was a precipitous rock; to his left a profound ravine with a torrent below, and the sides scantily clothed with fir-trees and bushes. He was, in fact, near the top of a long rising ground called "*la mauvaise côte*," on account of a murder committed there two hundred years ago.

Presently he heard the men close behind him. At the same moment he saw at the side of the ravine a flint stone about the size of two fists. He made but three swift strides, snatched it up, and turned to meet the robbers, drawing himself up high, and showing fight in every inch.

The men were upon him. His change of attitude was so sudden and fiery that they recoiled a step; but it was only for a moment. They had gone too far to retreat; they divided, and Thibout attacked him on his left with uplifted cudgel, and Moinard on his right with a long glittering knife. The latter, to guard his head from the stone, whipped off his hat, and held it before his head; but Dodd was what is called "left-handed," "ambidexter" would be nearer the mark (he carved and wrote with his right hand, heaved weights and flung cricket-balls with his left). He stepped forward, flung the stone in Thibout's face with perfect precision, and that bitter impetus a good thrower lends at the moment of delivery, and almost at the same moment shot out his right hand and caught Moinard by the throat. Sharper and fiercer collision was never seen than of these three.

Thibout's face crashed; his blood squirted all round the stone, and eight yards off lay that assailant on his back.

Moinard was more fortunate. He got two inches of his knife into Dodd's left shoulder, at the very moment Dodd caught him in his right-hand vise. And now one vengeful hand of iron grasped him felly by the throat; another seized his knife arm and twisted it back like a child's. He kicked and struggled furiously; but in half a minute the mighty English arm and iron fingers held the limp body of Jacques Moinard, with its knees knocking, temples bursting, throat relaxed, eyes protruding, and livid tongue lolling down to his chin; a few seconds

more, and with the same stalwart arm that kept his relaxed and sinking body from falling, Dodd gave him one fierce whirl round to the edge of the road, then put a foot to his middle, and spurned his carcass with amazing force and fury down the precipice. Crunch! crunch! it plunged from tree to tree, from bush to bush, and at last rolled into a thick bramble, and there stuck in the form of a crescent. But Dodd had no sooner sent him headlong by that mighty effort, than his own sight darkened, his head swam, and, after staggering a little way, he sank down in a state bordering on insensibility. Meantime Fullalove and Vespasian were galloping down the opposite hill to his rescue.

Unfortunately, André Thibout was not dead; nor even mortally wounded. He was struck on the nose and mouth: that nose was flat for the rest of his life, and half his front teeth were battered out of their sockets: but he fell, not from the brain being stunned, but the body driven to earth by the mere physical force of so momentous a blow: knocked down like a ninepin. He now sat up bewildered, and found himself in a pool of blood, his own. He had little sensation of pain; but he put his hand to his face, and found scarce a trace of his features; and his hand came away gory. He groaned.

Rising to his feet, he saw Dodd sitting at some distance: his first impulse was to fly from so terrible an antagonist: but, as he made for the ravine, he observed that Dodd was in a helpless condition, wounded perhaps by Moinard. And where was Moinard?

Nothing visible of him but his knife; that lay glittering in the road.

Thibout, with anxious eye turned towards Dodd, kneeled to pick it up: and in the act a drop of his own blood fell on the dust beside it. He snarled like

a wounded tiger, spat out half a dozen teeth, and crept on tiptoe to his safe revenge.

Awake from your lethargy, or you are a dead man!

No. Thibout got to him unperceived, and the knife glittered over his head.

At this moment the air seemed to fill with clattering hoofs and voices, and a pistol-shot rang. Dodd heard and started, and so saw his peril. He put up his left hand to parry the blow, but feebly. Luckily for him, Thibout's eyes were now turned another way, and glaring with stupid terror out of his mutilated visage: a gigantic mounted fiend, with black face and white gleaming, rolling eyes, was coming at him like the wind, uttering horrid howls; Thibout launched himself at the precipice with a shriek of dismay, and went rolling after his comrade; but, ere he had gone ten yards, he fell across a young larch-tree, and hung balanced. Up came the foaming horses: Fullalove dismounted hastily and fired three deliberate shots down at Thibout from his revolver. He rolled off, and never stopped again till he splashed into the torrent, and lay there staining it with blood from his battered face and perforated shoulder.

Vespasian jumped off, and with glistening eyes administered some good brandy to Dodd. He, unconscious of his wound, a slight one, relieved their anxiety by assuring them somewhat faintly he was not hurt, but that, ever since that "tap on the head" he got in the Straits of Gaspar, any angry excitement told on him, made his head swim, and his temples seem to swell from the inside.

"I should have come off second-best but for you, my dear friends. Shake hands over it, do! O Lord bless you! Lord bless you both! As for you, Vespasian, I do think you are my guardian angel. Why, this is the second time you've saved it. No, it isn't: for it's the third."

"Now you git along, Massa Cap'n," said Vespasian. "You bery good man, ridicalous good man : and dis child aren't no gardening angel at all ; he ar a darned anatomy" (with such a look of offended dignity at Fullalove).

After examining the field of battle and comparing notes, they mounted Dodd on Vespasian's horse, and walked quietly till Dodd's head got better ; and then they cantered on three abreast, Vespasian in the middle with one sinewy hand on each horse's mane ; and such was his muscular power that he often relieved his feet by lifting himself clean into the air : and the rest of the time his toe but touched the ground : and he sailed like an ostrich : and grinned and chattered like a monkey.

Sad to relate, neither Thibout nor Moinard was ended. The guillotine stood on its rights. Meantime, what was left of them crawled back to the town stiff and sore, and supped together — Moinard on liquids only — and vowed revenge on all wrecked people.

The three reached Boulogne in time for the Nancy, and put Dodd on board : the pair decided to go to the Yankee paradise — Paris.

They parted with regret and tenderly, like old tried friends ; and Vespasian told Dodd, with tears in his eyes, that, though he was in point of fact only a darned anemone, he felt like a colored gemman at parting from his dear old captain.

The master of the Nancy knew Dodd well, and gave him a nice cot to sleep in. He tumbled in with a bad headache and quite worn out, and never woke for fifteen hours.

And when he did wake he was safe at Barkington.

He and It landed on the quay. He made for home.

On the way he passed Hardie's bank, a firm synonymous in his mind with the Bank of England.

A thrill of joy went through him. Now It *was* safe.

When he first sewed It on in China, It seemed secure nowhere except on his own person. But, since then, the manifold perils by sea and land It had encountered through being on him, had caused a strong reaction in his mind on that point. He longed to see It safe out of his own hands and in good custody.

He made for Hardie's door with a joyful rush, waved his cap over his head in triumph, and entered the bank with It.

Ah!

CHAPTER XIV.

CHRONOLOGY.—The Hard Cash sailed from Canton months before the boat-race at Henley recorded in Chapter I., but it landed in Barkington a fortnight after the last home event I recorded in its true series.

Now this fortnight, as it happens, was fruitful of incidents, and must be dealt with at once. After that, “love” and “cash,” the converging branches of this story, will flow together in one stream.

Alfred Hardie kept faith with Mrs. Dodd, and, by an effort she appreciated, forbore to express his love for Julia except by the pen. He took in Lloyd’s shipping news, and got it down by rail in hopes there would be something about the Agra; then he could call at Albion Villa; Mrs. Dodd had given him that loop-hole: meantime he kept hoping for an invitation, which never came.

Julia was now comparatively happy, and so indeed was Alfred; but then the male of our species likes to be superlatively happy, not comparatively; and that Mrs. Dodd forgot, or perhaps had not observed.

One day Sampson was at Albion Villa, and Alfred knew it. Now, though it was a point of honor with poor Alfred not to hang about after Julia until her father’s return, he had a perfect right to lay in wait for Sampson, and hear something about her; and he was so deep in love that even a word at second-hand from her lips was a drop of dew to his heart.

So he strolled up towards the villa. He had nearly reached it, when a woman ran past him making the

most extraordinary sounds; I can only describe it as screaming under her breath. Though he only saw her back, he recognized Mrs. Maxley. One back differeth from another, whatever you may have been told to the contrary in novels and plays. He called to her; she took no notice, and darted wildly through the gate of Albion Villa. Alfred's curiosity was excited, and he ventured to put his head over the gate; but Mrs. Maxley had disappeared.

Alfred had half a mind to go in and inquire if anything was the matter: it would be a good excuse.

While he hesitated, the dining-room window was thrown violently up, and Sampson looked out: "Hy! Hardie! my good fellow! for heaven's sake a fly! and a fast one!"

It was plain something very serious had occurred, so Alfred flew towards the nearest fly-stand. On the way, he fell in with a chance fly drawn up at a public-house; he jumped on the box and drove rapidly towards Albion Villa. Sampson was hobbling to meet him — he had sprained his ankle, or would not have asked for a conveyance; to save time, he got up beside Alfred, and told him to drive hard to Little Friar Street. On the way he explained hurriedly: Mrs. Maxley had burst in on him at Albion Villa to say her husband was dying in torment; and indeed the symptoms she gave were alarming, and, if correct, looked very like lockjaw; but her description had been cut short by a severe attack, which choked her and turned her speechless and motionless and white to the very lips.

"'Oho,' sis I, 'brist-pang!' And at such a time, ye know. But these women are as unseasonable as they are unreasonable. Now *angina pictoris*, or brist-pang, is not curable through the lungs nor the stomieck nor the liver nor the stays nor the saucepan, as the bunglintink-

erindox of the schools pretend, but only through that mighty mainspring the brain; and instead of going meandering to the brain round by the stomach, and so giving the wumman lots o' time to die first, which is the scholastic practice, I went at the brain direct, took a puff o' chloroform, put m' arm round her neck, laid her back in a chair — she didn't struggle, for when this disorder grips ye, ye can't move hand nor foot — and had my lady into the land of Nod in half a minute; thin off t' her husband; so here's th' healer between two stools — spare the whipcord, spoil the knacker! — it would be a good joke if I was to lose both pashints for want of a little unbeequity, wouldn't it — Lash the lazy vagabind! — Not that I care: what interest have I in their lives? they never pay; but, ye see, custom's second nature; an d'I've formed a vile habit: I've got to be a healer among the killers; an d'a Triton among — the millers; here we are at last, Hiven be praised." And he hopped into the house faster than most people can run on a good errand. Alfred flung the reins to a cad, and followed him.

The room was nearly full of terrified neighbors; Sampson shouldered them all roughly out of his way; and there, on a bed, lay Maxley's gaunt figure in agony.

His body was drawn up by the middle into an arch, and nothing touched the bed but the head and the heels; the toes were turned back in the most extraordinary contortion, and the teeth set by the rigor of the convulsion; and in the man's white face and fixed eyes were the horror and anxiety that so often show themselves when the body feels itself in the gripe of death.

Mr. Osmond, the surgeon, was there; he had applied a succession of hot cloths to the pit of the stomach, and was trying to get laudanum down the throat, but the clenched teeth were impassable.

He now looked up and said politely, "Ah! Dr.

Sampson, I am glad to see you here. The seizure is of a cataleptic nature, I apprehend. The treatment hitherto has been hot epithems to the abdomen, and" —

Here Sampson, who had examined the patient keenly and paid no more attention to Osmond than to a fly buzzing, interrupted him as unceremoniously, —

"Poisoned," said he, philosophically.

"Poisoned!" screamed the people.

"Poisoned!" cried Mr. Osmond, in whose little list of stereotyped maladies poisoned had no place. "Is there any one you have reason to suspect?"

"I don't suspect nor conject, sir; I know. The man is poisoned; the substance, strychnine. Now stand out of the way, you gaping gabies, and let me work. Hy, young Oxford! you are a man; get behind and hold both his arms for your life! That's you."

He whipped off his coat, laid hold of Osmond's epithems, chucked them across the room, saying, "You may just as well squirt rose-water at a house on fire," drenched his handkerchief with chloroform, sprang upon the patient like a mountain cat, and chloroformed him with all his might.

Attacked so skilfully and resolutely, Maxley resisted little for so strong a man; but the potent poison within fought virulently: as a proof, the chloroform had to be renewed three times before it could produce any effect. At last the patient yielded to the fumes, and became insensible.

Then the arched body subsided, and the rigid muscles relaxed and turned supple. Sampson kneaded the man like dough by way of comment.

"It is really very extraordinary," said Osmond.

"Mai — dearr — sirr — nothing's extraornary; t' a man that knows the reason of iverything."

He then inquired if any one in the room had noticed at what intervals of time the pains came on.

"I am sorry to say it is continuous," said Osmond.

"Mai — dearr — sirr — nothing on airth is continuous; iverything has paroxysms and remissions — from a toothache t' a cancer."

He repeated his query in various forms, till at last a little girl squeaked out: "If — *you* — please, sir, the throes do come about every ten minutes, for I was a-looking at the clock; I carries father his dinner at twelve."

"If you please, ma'am, there's half a guinea for you for not being such a n' ijjit as the rest of the world, especially the dockers." And he jerked her half a sovereign.

A stupor fell on the assembly. They awoke from it to examine the coin and see if it was real, or only yellow air.

Maxley came to, and gave a sigh of relief. When he had been sensible, yet out of pain, nearly eight minutes by the clock, Sampson chloroformed him again. "I'll puzzle ye, my friend strych," said he. "How will ye get your perriodical paroxysm when the man is insensible? The dox say y' act direct on the spinal marrow. Well, there's the spinal marrow where you found it just now. Act on it again, my lad! I give ye leave — if ye can. Ye can't; bekase ye must pass through the brain to get there; and I occupy the brain with a swifter ajint than y' are, and mean to keep y' out of it till your power to kill evaporates, being a vigitable."

With this his spirits mounted, and he indulged in a harmless and favorite fiction: he feigned the company were all males and medical students, Osmond included, and he the lecturer: "Now, jintlemen," said he, "ob-sairve the great therey of the perriodeecity and remit-tency of all disease, in conjunekshin with its practice. All diseases have paroxysms, and remissions, which

occur at intervals; sometimes it's a year, sometimes a day, an hour, ten minutes; but whatever th' interval, they are true to it; they keep time. Only when the disease is retirin', the remissions become longer, the paroxysms return at a greater interval; and just the revairse when the pashint is to die. This, jintlemen, is man's life from the womb to the grave; the throes that precede his birth are remittent like iverything else, but come at diminished intervals when he has really made up his mind to be born (his first mistake, sirs, but not his last); and the paroxysms of his mortal disease come at shorter intervals when he is really goon off the hooks, but still chronometrically, just as watches keep time whether they go fast or slow. Now, jintlemen, isn't this a beautiful therey?"

"Oh, mercy! oh, good people, help me! O Jesus Christ, have pity on me!" And the sufferer's body was bent like a bow, and his eyes filled with horror, and his toes pointed at his chin.

The doctor hurled himself on the foe: "Come," said he, "smell to this, lad! That's right! He is better already, jintlemen, or he couldn't howl, ye know. Deevil a howl in um before I gave um puff chlorofm. Ah! would ye? would ye?"

"Oh! oh! oh! oh! ugh!—ah!"

The doctor got off the insensible body, and resumed his lecture calmly, like one who has disposed of some childish interruption: "And now to th' application of the therey: if the poison can reduce the tin minutes' interval to five minutes, this pashint will die; and if I can get the tin minutes up t' half hour, this pashint will live. Any way, jintlemen, we won't detain y' unreasonably; the case shall be at an end by one o'clock."

On hearing this considerate stipulation, up went three women's aprons to their eyes.

“Alack! poor James Maxley! he is at his last hour; it be just gone twelve, and a dies at one.”

Sampson turned on the weepers. “Who says that, y’ ijjits? I said the case would end at one: a case ends when the pashint gets well, or dies.”

“Oh, that is good news for poor Susan Maxley; her man is to be well by one o’clock, doctor says.”

Sampson groaned, and gave in. He was strong, but not strong enough to make the populace suspend an opinion.

Yet, methinks it might be done by chloroforming them.

The spasms came at longer intervals and less violent; and Maxley got so fond of the essence of insensibility, that he asked to have some in his own hand to apply at the first warning of the horrible pains.

Sampson said, “Any fool can complete the cure;” and, by way of practical comment, left him in Mr. Osmond’s charge, but with an understanding that the treatment should not be varied, that no laudanum should be given; but, in due course, a stiff tumbler of brandy and water, or two. “If he gets drunk, all the better; a little intoxication weakens the body’s memory of the pain it has endured, and so expedites the cure. Now off we go to th’ other.”

“The body’s memory!” said Mr. Osmond to himself; “what on earth does the quack mean?”

The driver, *de jure*, of the fly, was not quite drunk enough to lose his horse and vehicle without missing them. He was on the lookout for the robber; and, as Alfred came round the corner full pelt, darted at the reins with a husky remonstrance, and Alfred cut into him with the whip: an angry explanation—a guinea—and behold, the driver sitting behind, complacent and nodding.

Arrived at Albion Villa, Alfred asked Sampson submissively if he might come in and see the wife cured.

"Why, of course," said Sampson, not knowing the delicate position.

"Then ask me in before Mrs. Dodd," murmured Alfred, coaxingly.

"Oo, ay," said the doctor, knowingly. "I see."

Mrs. Maxley was in the dining-room; she had got well of herself, but was crying bitterly, and the ladies would not let her go home yet; they feared the worst, and that some one would blurt it out of her.

To this anxious trio entered Sampson, radiant: "There, it's all right. Come, little Maxley, ye needn't cry; he has got lots more mischief to do in the world, yet; but, oh, wumman, it is lucky you came to me and not to any of the tinkering dox. No more cat and dog for you and him, but for the chronothairmal therey; and you may bless my puppy's four bones, too; he ran and stole a fly like a man, and drove hilter-skilter; now, if I had got to your house two minutes later, your Jamie would have lairned the great secret ere this." He threw up the window. "Haw, you! come away, and receive the applause due from beauty t' ajeelity."

Alfred came in timidly, and was received with perfect benignity and self-possession by Mrs. Dodd; but Julia's face was dyed with blushes, and her eyes sparkled the eloquent praise she was ashamed to speak before them all. But such a face as hers scarce needed the help of a voice at such a time. And, indeed, both the lovers' faces were a pretty sight, and a study. How they stole loving glances! but tried to keep within bounds, and not steal more than three per minute! and how unconscious they endeavored to look the intervening seconds! and what windows were the demure complacent visages they thought they were making shutters of! Innocent love

has at least this advantage over melodramatic, that it can extract exquisite sweetness out of so small a thing. These sweethearts were not alone, could not open their hearts, must not even gaze too long; yet to be in the same room even on such terms was a taste of heaven.

“But, dear heart!” said Mrs. Maxley, “ye don’t tell me what he ailed. Ma’am, if you had seen him, you would have said he was taken for death.”

“Pray what *is* the complaint?” inquired Mrs. Dodd.

“Oh, didn’t I tell ye? poisoned.”

This intelligence was conveyed with true scientific calmness, and received with feminine ejaculations of horror. Mrs. Maxley was indignant into the bargain: “Don’t ye go giving my house an ill name! We keeps no poison.”

Sampson fixed his eyes sternly on her: “Wumman, ye know better: ye keep strychnine for th’ use and delectation of your domestic animal.”

“Strychnine! I never heard tell of it. Is that Latin for arsenic?”

“Now isn’t this lamentable? Why, arsenic is a mital, strychnine a vigitable. Nlist me! Your man was here seeking strychnine to poison his mouse, a harmless, domestic, necessary mouse: I told him mice were a part of nature as much as Maxleys, and life as sweet tit as tim; but he was dif to sceintific and chrischin precepts, so I told him to go to the Deevil; ‘I will,’ sis he, and went t’ a docker. The two assassins have poisoned the poor beastie between ’em; and thin, been the greatest miser in the world, except one, he will have roasted his victim, and ate her on the sly, imprignated with strychnine. ‘I’ll steal a march on t’other miser,’ sis he, and that’s you; t’ his brain flew the strychnine; his brain sint it to his spinal marrow, and we found my lorrd bent like a bow, and his jaw locked, and nearer

knowin' the great secret than any man in England will be this year to live: and sairves the assassinating old vagibin right."

"Heaven forgive you, doctor," said Mrs. Maxley, half mechanically.

"For curin' a murrderer? Not likely."

Mrs. Maxley, who had shown signs of singular uneasiness during Sampson's explanation, now rose, and said, in a very peculiar tone, she must go home directly.

Mrs. Dodd seemed to enter into her feelings, and made her go in the fly, taking care to pay the fare and the driver out of her own purse. As the woman got into the fly, Sampson gave her a piece of friendly and practical advice. "Nixt time he has a mind to breakfast on strychnine, you tell me; and I'll put a pinch of arsenic in the saltcellar, and cure him safe as the bank. But this time he'd have been did, and stiff, long before such a slow ajint as arsenic could get a hold on um."

They sat down to luncheon, but neither Alfred nor Julia fed much, except upon sweet, stolen looks; and soon the active Sampson jumped up, and invited Alfred to go round his patients. Alfred could not decline, but made his adieus with regret so tender and undisguised, that Julia's sweet eyes filled, and her soft hand instinctively pressed his at parting to console him. She blushed at herself afterwards, but at the time she was thinking only of him.

Maxley and his wife came up in the evening with a fee. They had put their heads together, and proffered one guinea. "Man and wife be one flesh, you know, doctor," said the rustic miser.

Sampson, whose natural choler was constantly checked by his humor, declined this profuse proposal. "Here's vanity!" said he; "now do you really think your two

lives are worth a guinea? Why, it's two hundred and fifty-two pence! ten hundred and eight farthings!"

The pair affected disappointment: vilely.

At all events, he must accept this basket of gudgeons Maxley had brought along. Being poisoned was quite out of Maxley's daily routine, and had so unsettled him that he had got up, and gone fishing, to the amazement of the parish.

Sampson inspected the basket. "Why, they are only fish!" said he. "*I was in hopes they were pashints.*" He accepted the gudgeons, and inquired how Maxley got poisoned. It came out that Mrs. Maxley, seeing her husband set apart a portion of his Welsh rabbit, had "grizzled," and asked what that was for? and being told "for the mouse," and to "mind her own business," had grizzled still more, and furtively conveyed a portion back into the pan for her master's own use. She had been quaking dismally all the afternoon at what she had done; but finding Maxley — hard but just — did not attack her for an involuntary fault, she now brazened it out and said, "Men didn't ought to have poison in the house unbeknown to their wives. Jem had got no more than he worked for," etc. But, like a woman, she vowed vengeance on the mouse; whereupon Maxley threatened her with the marital correction of neck-twisting, if she laid a finger on it.

"My eyes be open now to what a poor creature do feel as dies poisoned. Let her a-be; there's room in our place for her and we."

Next day he met Alfred, and thanked him with warmth, almost with emotion. "There ain't many in Barkington as ever done me a good turn, Master Alfred; you be one on em; you comes after the captain in my book now."

Alfred suggested that his claims were humble compared with Sampson's.

“No, no,” said Maxley, going down to his whisper, and looking monstrous wise; “doctor didn’t go out of business for me; you did.”

The sage miser’s gratitude had not time to die a natural death before circumstances occurred to test it. On the morning of that eventful day, which concluded my last chapter, he received a letter from Canada. His wife was out with eggs; so he caught little Rose Sutton, that had more than once spelled an epistle for him, and she read it out in a loud and reckless whine: “‘At — noon — this — very — daie — Muster — Hardie’s a-g-e-n-t — aguent — d-i-s dis, h-o-n — Honored — dis-Honored — a — bill; and sayed.’” Here she made a full stop. Then on to the next verse.

“‘There — were no — more — asses.’”

“Mercy on us! but it can’t be asses, wench: drive your spe-ad into’t again.”

“‘A-s-s-e-t-s. Assets.’”

“Ah! Go an! go an!”

“‘Now — Fatter — if — you — leave — a s-h-i-l-l-i-n-g shilling — at — Hardie’s — after — this — b-l-a-m-e — ble-am — your — self — not — me — for — this — is — the — waie — the — r-o-g-u-e-s — rogews — all — break — they — go — at — a — d-i-s-t-a-n-c-e — distance — first — and — then — at — h-o-m-e — whuoame. Dear — fatter’ — Lawk o’daisy, what ails you, Daddy Maxley? You be as white as a Sunday smock. Be you poisoned again, if *you* please?”

“Worse than that — worse!” groaned Maxley, trembling all over. “Hush! — hold your tongue! Give me that letter! Don’t you never tell nobody nothing of what you have been a-reading to me, and I’ll — I’ll — It’s only Jem’s fun: he is allus running his rigs — that’s a good wench now, and I’ll give ye a halfpenny.”

“La, daddy,” said the child, opening her eyes, “I

never heeds what I *re-ads*: I be wrapped up in the spelling. Dear heart, what a sight of long words folks puts in a letter, more than ever drops out of their mouths; which their fingers be longer than their tongues, I do suppose."

Maxley hailed this information characteristically: "Then we'll say no more about the halfpenny."

At this Rose raised a lamentable cry, and pearly tears gushed forth.

"There, there," said Maxley, deprecatingly; "here's two apples for ye: ye can't get them for less, and a halfpenny or a ha'porth is all one to you: but it is a great odds to me. And apples they rot; halfpence don't."

It was now nine o'clock. The bank did not open till ten; but Maxley went and hung about the door, to be the first applicant.

As he stood there trembling with fear lest the bank should not open at all, he thought hard, and the result was a double resolution: he would have his money out to the last shilling, and, this done, would button up his pockets and padlock his tongue. It was not his business to take care of his neighbors, nor to blow the Hardies, if they paid him his money on demand. "So not a word to my missus, nor yet to the town-crier," said he.

Ten o'clock struck, and the bank shutters remained up. Five minutes more, and the watcher was in agony. Three minutes more, and up came a boy of sixteen whistling, and took down the shutters with an indifference that amazed him. "Bless your handsome face!" said Maxley, with a sigh of relief.

He now summoned all his firmness, and, having recourse to an art in which these shrewd rustics are supreme, made his face quite inexpressive, and so walked into the bank the every-day Maxley, externally; but,

within, a volcano ready to burst if there should be the slightest hesitation to pay him his money.

“Good-morning, Mr. Maxley,” said young Skinner.

“Good-morning, sir.”

“What can we do for you?”

“Oh, I’ll wait my turn, sir.”

“Well, it is your turn now, if you like.”

“How much have you got of mine, if you please, sir?”

“Your balance? I’ll see. Nine hundred and four pounds.”

“Well, sir, then if *you* please, I’ll draa *that*.”

“It has come,” thought Skinner. “What, going to desert us?” he stammered.

“No,” said the other, trembling inwardly, but not moving a facial muscle; “it is only for a day or two, sir.”

“Ah! I see, going to make a purchase. By-the-by, I believe Mr. Hardie means to offer you some grounds he is buying outside the town; will that suit your book?”

“I dare say it will, sir.”

“Then perhaps you will wait till our governor comes in?”

“I have no objection.”

“He won’t be long. Fine weather for the gardens, Mr. Maxley.”

“Moderate, sir. I’ll take my money, if you please. Counting of it out, that will help pass the time till Muster Hardie comes. You ha’n’t made away with it?”

“What d’ye mean, sir?”

“Hardies bain’t turned thieves, be they?”

“Are you mad or intoxicated, James Maxley?”

“Neither, sir; but I wants my own, and I wool have it too: so count out on this here counter, or I’ll cry the town round that there door.”

“Henry, score James Maxley’s name off the books,” said Skinner, with cool dignity. But, when he had said this, he was at his wits’ end: there were not nine hundred pounds of hard cash in the bank, nor anything like it.

CHAPTER XV.

SKINNER — called “young” because he had once had a father on the premises — was the mole-catcher. The feelings with which he had now for some months watched his master grubbing, were curiously mingled. There was the grim sense of superiority every successful detective feels as he sees the watched one working away unconscious of the eye that is on him; but this was more than balanced by a long habit of obsequious reverence. When A has been looking up to B for thirty years, he cannot look down on him all of a sudden, merely because he catches him falsifying accounts. Why, man is a cooking animal; bankrupt man especially.

And then Richard Hardie overpowered Skinner's senses: he was dignity in person; he was six feet two, and always wore a black surtout buttoned high, and a hat with a brim a little broader than his neighbors, yet not broad enough to be eccentric or slang. He moved down the street touching his hat, — while other hats were lifted high to him, — a walking column of cash. And when he took off this ebon crown, and sat in the bank parlor, he gained in appearance more than he lost, for then his whole head was seen, long, calm, majestic; that senatorial front, and furrowed face, overawed all comers: even the little sharp-faced clerk would stand and peep at it utterly puzzled between what he knew and what he eyed; nor could he look at that head and face without excusing them. What a lot of money they must have sunk before they came down to fabricating a balance-sheet!

And by and by custom somewhat blunted his sense of the dishonesty, and he began to criticise the thing arithmetically instead of morally; that view once admitted, he was charmed with the ability and subtlety of his dignified sharper; and so the mole-catcher began gradually, but effectually, to be corrupted by the mole. He who watches a dishonest process and does not stop it, is half-way towards conniving; who connives, is half-way towards abetting.

The next thing was, Skinner felt mortified at his master not trusting him. Did he think old Bob Skinner's son would blow on Hardie after all these years?

This rankled a little, and set him to console himself by admiring his own cleverness in penetrating this great distrustful man. Now of all sentiments vanity is the most restless and the surest to peep out. Skinner was no sooner inflated, than his demure, obsequious manner underwent a certain change; slight and occasional only; but Hardie was a subtle man, and the perilous path he was treading made him wonderfully watchful, suspicious, and sagacious; he said to himself, "What has come to Skinner? I must know." So he quietly watched his watcher, and soon satisfied himself he suspected something amiss. From that hour Skinner was a doomed clerk.

It was two o'clock; Hardie had just arrived, and sat in the parlor Cato-like, and cooking.

Skinner was in high spirits; it was owing to his presence of mind the bank had not been broken some hours ago by Maxley: so now, while concluding his work, he was enjoying by anticipation his employer's gratitude. "He can't hold aloof after this," said Skinner; "he must honor me with his confidence. And I will deserve it. I do deserve it."

A grave, calm, passionless voice invited him into the parlor.

He descended from his desk and went in, swelling with demure complacency.

He found Mr. Hardie seated garbling his accounts with surpassing dignity. The great man handed him an envelope, and cooked majestic on. A wave of that imperial hand, and Skinner had mingled with the past.

For know that the envelope contained three things: a check for a month's wages, a character, and a dismissal, very polite, and equally peremptory.

Skinner stood paralyzed: the complacency died out of his face, and rueful wonder came instead. It was some time before he could utter a word; at last he faltered, "Turn me away, sir? turn away Noah Skinner! Your father would never have said such a word to *my* father." Skinner uttered this his first remonstrance in a voice trembling with awe, but gathered courage when he found he had done it, yet lived.

Mr. Hardie evaded his expostulation by a very simple means; he made no reply, but continued his work, dignified as Brutus, inexorable as fate, cool as cucumber.

Skinner's anger began to rise. He watched Mr. Hardie in silence, and said to himself, "Curse you! you were born without a heart!"

He waited, however, for some sign of relenting; and, hoping for it, the water came into his own eyes. But Hardie was impassive as ice.

Then the little clerk, mortified to the core, as well as wounded, ground his teeth, and drew a little nearer to this incarnate Arithmetic, and said with an excess of obsequiousness, "Will you condescend to give me a reason for turning me away all in a moment, after five and thirty years' faithful services?"

"Men of business do not deal in reasons," was the cool reply; "it is enough for you that I give you an excellent character, and that we part good friends."

"That we do not," replied Skinner sharply; "if we stay together, we are friends: but we part enemies, if we do part."

"As you please, Mr. Skinner. I will detain you no longer."

And Mr. Hardie waved him away so grandly, that he started and almost ran to the door. When he felt the handle, it acted like a prop to his heart. He stood firm, and rage supplied the place of steady courage. He clung to the door, and whispered at his master; such a whisper! so loud, so cutting, so full of meaning and malice; it was like a serpent hissing at a man. "But I'll give *you* a reason, a good reason, why you had better not insult me so cruel; and what is more, I'll give you two: and one is that but for me the bank must have closed this day at ten o'clock — ay, you may stare; it was I saved it, not you: and the other is that, if you make an enemy of me, you are done for. I know too much to be made an enemy of, sir, — a great deal too much."

At this, Mr. Hardie raised his head from his book and eyed his crouching, venomous assailant full in the face, majestically, as one can fancy a lion rearing his ponderous head, and looking lazily and steadily at a snake that has just hissed in a corner. Each word of Skinner's was a barbed icicle to him: yet not a muscle of his close countenance betrayed his inward suffering.

One thing, however, even he could not master, his blood; it retired from that stoical cheek to the chilled and foreboding heart; and the sudden pallor of the resolute face told Skinner his shafts had gone home. "Come, sir," said he, affecting to mingle good-fellowship with his defiance; "why bundle me off these premises, when you will be bundled off them yourself before the week is out?"

"You insolent scoundrel! Humph! explain, Mr. Skinner."

"Ah, what! have I warmed your marble up a bit? Yes, I'll explain. The bank is rotten, and can't last forty-eight hours."

"Oh, indeed! blighted in a day — by the dismissal of Mr. Noah Skinner. Do not repeat that after you have been turned into the streets, or you will be indicted; at present we are confidential. Anything more before you quit the rotten bank?"

"Yes, sir, plenty. I'll tell you your own history, past, present, and to come. The road to riches is hard and rugged to the likes of me; but your good father made it smooth and easy to you, sir; you had only to take the money of a lot of fools that fancy they can't keep it themselves; invest it in consols and exchequer bills, live on half the profits, put by the rest, and roll in wealth. But this was too slow, and too sure, for you; you must be Rothschild in a day; so you went into blind speculation, and flung old Mr. Hardie's savings into a well. And now, for the last eight months, you have been doctoring the ledger;" Hardie winced just perceptibly; "you have put down our gains in white, our losses in black, and so you keep feeding your pocket-book and emptying our tills: the pear will soon be ripe, and then you will let it drop, and into the bankruptcy court we go. But, what you forget, fraudulent bankruptcy isn't the turnpike way of trade: it is a broad road, but a crooked one: skirts the prison-wall, sir, and sights the herring-pond."

An agony went across Mr. Hardie's great face; and seemed to furrow as it ran.

"Not but what *you* are all right, sir," resumed his little cat-like tormentor, letting him go a little way, to nail him again by and by: "you have cooked the books in time; and Cocker was a fool to you. 'Twill be all down in black and white. Great sacrifices: no reserve:

creditors take everything; dividend fourpence in the pound, furniture of house and bank, Mrs. Hardie's portrait, and down to the coal-scuttle. Bankrupt saves nothing but his honor, and — the six thousand pounds or so he has stitched into his old great-coat: hands his new one to the official assignees, like an honest man."

Hardie uttered something between a growl and a moan.

"Now comes the *per contra*: poor little despised Noah Skinner has kept genuine books, while you have been preparing false ones. I took the real figures home every afternoon on loose leaves, and bound 'em: and very curious they will read in court alongside of yours. I did it for amusement o' nights; I'm so solitary and so fond of figures: I must try and turn them to profit: for I'm out of place now in my old age. Dearee me! how curious that you should go and pick out me of all men, to turn into the street like a dog — like a dog — like a dog."

Hardie turned his head away; and, in that moment of humiliation and abject fear, drank all the bitterness of moral death.

His manhood urged him to defy Skinner and return to the straight path, cost what it might. But how could he? His own books were all falsified. He could place a true *total* before his creditors by simply adding the contents of his secret hoard to the assets of the bank; but with this true arithmetical result he could not square his books, except by conjectural and fabricated details, which would be detected, and send him to prison; for who would believe he was lying in figures only to get back to the truth? No; he had entangled himself in his own fraud, and was at the mercy of his servant. He took his line. "Skinner, it was your interest to leave me whilst the bank stood; then you would have got a

place directly; but since you take umbrage at my dismissing you for your own good, I must punish you — by keeping you.”

“I am quite ready to stay and serve you, sir,” replied Skinner hastily; “and as for my angry words, think no more of them! it went to my heart to be turned away at the very time you need me most.”

“Hypocritical rogue!” thought Hardie. “That is true, Skinner,” said he; “I do indeed need a faithful and sympathizing servant, to advise, support, and aid me. Ask yourself whether any man in England needs a confidant more than I! It was bitter at first to be discovered even by you: but now I am glad you know all; for I see I have undervalued your ability as well as your zeal.”

Thus Mr. Hardie bowed his pride to flatter Skinner: and soon saw by the little fellow’s heightened color that this was the way to make him a clerk of wax.

The banker and his clerk were reconciled. Then the latter was invited to commit himself by carrying on the culinary process in his own hand. He trembled a little: but complied, and so became an accomplice; on this his master took him into his confidence, and told him everything it was impossible to hide from him.

“And now, sir,” said Skinner, “let me tell you what I did for you this morning. Then perhaps you won’t wonder at my being so peppery. Maxley *suspects*: he came here and drew out every shilling. I was all in a perspiration what to do. But I put a good face on, and ” —

Skinner then confided to his principal how he had evaded Maxley, and saved the bank; and the stratagem seemed so incredible and droll, that they both laughed over it long and loud. And in fact it turned out a first-rate practical jest; cost two lives.

While they were laughing, the young clerk looked in, and said, "Captain Dodd, to speak with you, sir."

"Captain Dodd!" And all Mr. Hardie's forced merriment died away, and his face betrayed his vexation for once. "Did you go and tell him I was here?"

"Yes, sir: I have no orders; and he said you would be sure to see *him*."

"Unfortunate! Well, you may show him in when I ring your bell."

The youngster being gone, Mr. Hardie explained to his new ally in a few hurried words the danger that threatened him from Miss Julia Dodd. "And now," said he, "the women have sent her father to soften his. I shall be told his girl will die if she can't have my boy, etc. As if I care who lives or dies."

On this Skinner got up all in a hurry, and offered to go into the office.

"On no account," said Mr. Hardie, sharply. "I shall make my business with you the excuse for cutting this love-nonsense mighty short. Take your book to the desk, and seem buried in it."

He then touched the bell, and both confederates fell into an attitude: never were a pair so bent over their little accounts; lies, like themselves.

Instead of the heart-broken father their comedy awaited, in came the gallant sailor with a brown cheek reddened by triumph and excitement, and almost shouted in a genial, jocund voice, "How d'ye do, sir? It is a long time since I came across your hawse." And with this he held out his hand cordially. Hardie gave his mechanically, and remained on his guard; but somewhat puzzled. Dodd shook his cold hand heartily. "Well, sir, here I am, just come ashore, and visiting you before my very wife: what d'ye think of that?"

"I am highly honored, sir," said Hardie: then, rather

stiffly and incredulously, "And to what may I owe this extraordinary preference? Will you be good enough to state the purport of this visit — briefly — as Mr. Skinner and I are much occupied."

"The purport? Why, what does one come to a banker about? I have got a lot of money I want to get rid of."

Hardie stared; but was as much on his guard as ever; only more and more puzzled.

Then David winked at him with simple cunning, took out his knife, undid his shirt, and began to cut the threads which bound the cash to his flannel.

At this Skinner wheeled round on his stool to look, and both he and Mr. Hardie inspected the unusual pantomime with demure curiosity.

Dodd next removed the oilskin cover, and showed the pocket-book, brought it down with a triumphant smack on the hollow of his hand, and, in the pride of his heart, the joy of his bosom, and the fever of his blood — for there were two red spots on his cheek all the time — told the cold pair its adventures in a few glowing words; the Calcutta firm, — the two pirates, — the hurricane, — the wreck, — the land-sharks, — he had saved it from. "And here it is, safe in spite of them all. But I won't carry it on me any more; it is unlucky: so you must be so good as to take charge of it for me, sir."

"Very well, Captain Dodd. You wish it placed to Mrs. Dodd's account, I suppose."

"No! no! I have nothing to do with that: this is between you and me."

"As you please."

"Ye see it is a good lump, sir."

"Oh, indeed!" said Hardie, a little sneeringly.

"I call it a thundering lot o' money. But I suppose it is not much to a rich banker like you." Then he lowered

his voice, and said with a certain awe: "It's — fourteen — thousand — pounds."

"Fourteen thousand pounds!" cried Hardie. Then with sudden and consummate coolness, "Why, certainly an established bank like this deals with more considerable deposits than that. Skinner, why don't you give the man a chair?"

"No, no!" said Dodd. "I'll heave to till I get this off my mind; but I won't anchor anywhere but at home." He then opened the pocket-book and spread the contents out before Mr. Hardie, who ran over the notes and bills, and said the amount was £14,010. 12s. 6d.

Dodd asked for a receipt.

"Why, it is not usual, when there is an account."

Dodd's countenance fell: "Oh, I should not like to part with it, unless I had a receipt."

"You mistake me," said Hardie, with a smile. "An entry in your banker's books is a receipt. However, you can have one in another form." He then unlocked a desk; took out a banker's receipt; and told Skinner to fill it in. This done, he seemed to be absorbed in some more important matter.

Skinner counted the notes and left them with Mr. Hardie; the bills he took to his desk to note them on the back of the receipt. Whilst he was writing this with his usual slowness and precision, poor Dodd's heart overflowed: "It is my children's fortune, ye see: I don't look on a sixpence of it as mine: that it is what made me so particular. It belongs to my little Julia, bless her! — she is a rosebud if ever there was one; and oh, such a heart; and so fond of her poor father; but not fonder than he is of her — and to my dear boy Edward; he is the honestest young chap you ever saw: what he says, you may swear to, with your eyes shut; but how could they miss either good looks or good hearts, and

her children? the best wife and the best mother in England. She has been a true consort to me this many a year, and I to her, in deep water and shoal, let the wind blow high or low. Here is a Simple Simon vaunting his own flesh and blood! No wonder that little gentleman there is grinning at me: well, grin away, lad! perhaps you haven't got any children. But you have, sir: and you know how it is with us fathers; our hearts are so full of the little darlings, out it must come. *You* can understand how joyful I feel at saving their fortune from land sharks and sea sharks, and landing it safe in an honest man's hands, like you and your father before you."

Skinner handed him the receipt.

He cast his eye over it. "All right, little gentleman. Now my heart is relieved of such a weight: I feel to have just cleared out a cargo of bricks. Good-by! shake hands! I wish you were as happy as I am. I wish all the world was happy. God bless you! God bless you both!"

And with this burst he was out of the room, and making ardently for Albion Villa.

The banker and his clerk turned round on their seats and eyed one another a long time in silence and amazement.

Was this thing a dream? their faces seemed to ask.

Then Mr. Hardie rested his senatorial head on his hand, and pondered deeply. Skinner, too, reflected on this strange freak of fortune: and the result was that he burst in on his principal's reverie with a joyful shout: "The bank is saved! Hardie's is good for another hundred years."

The banker started, for Skinner's voice sounded like a pistol-shot in his ear, so high strung was he with thought.

"Hush! hush!" he said: and pondered again in silence.

At last he turned to Skinner. "You think our course is plain? I tell you it is so dark and complicated, it would puzzle Solomon to know what is best to be done."

"Save the bank, sir! whatever you do."

"How can I save the bank with a few thousand pounds, which I must refund when called on? You look keenly into what is under your eye, Skinner; but you cannot see a yard beyond your nose. Let me think."

After awhile he took a sheet of paper, and jotted down "the materials," as he called them, and read them out to his accomplice.

"1. A bank too far gone to be redeemed. If I throw this money into it, I shall ruin Captain Dodd, and do myself no good, but only my creditors.

"2. Miss Julia Dodd, virtual proprietor of this fourteen thousand pounds: or of the greater part, if I choose. The child that marries first usually jockeys the other.

"3. Alfred Hardie, my son and my creditor, deep in love with No. 2, and at present somewhat alienated from me by my thwarting a silly love affair; which bids fair to improve into a sound negotiation.

"4. The fourteen thousand pounds paid to me personally after banking hours, and not entered on the banking books, nor known but to you and me.

"Now suppose I treat this advance as a personal trust? The bank breaks; the money disappears. Consternation of the Dodds, who, until enlightened by the public settlement, will think it has gone into the well.

"In that interval I talk Alfred over; and promise to produce the fourteen thousand pounds intact, with my paternal blessing on him and Miss Dodd; provided he will release me from my debt to him, and give me a life

interest in half the money settled on him by my wife's father to my most unjust and insolent exclusion. Their passion will soon bring the young people to reason; and then they will soon melt the old ones."

Skinner was struck with this masterly little sketch. But he detected one fatal flaw: "You don't say what is to become of me."

"Oh, I haven't thought of that yet."

"But do think of it, sir! that I may have the pleasure of co-operating. It would never do for you and me to be pulling two ways, you know."

"I will not forget you," said Hardie, wincing under the chain this little wretch held him with, and had jerked him by way of reminder.

"But surely, Skinner, you agree with me it would be a sin and a shame to rob this honest captain of his money — for my creditors; curse them! Ah, you are not a father. How quickly he found that out! Well, I am; and he touched me to the quick; I love my little Jane as dearly as he loves his Julia, every bit; and I feel for *him*. And then he put me in mind of my own father; poor man. That seems strange, doesn't it? a sailor; and a banker. Ah! it was because they were both honest men. Yes, it was like a wholesome flower coming into a close room, and then out again and leaving a whiff behind, was that sailor. He left the savor of probity and simplicity behind, though he took the things themselves away again. Why, why couldn't he leave us what is more wanted here than even his money? His integrity; the pearl of price, that my father, whom I used to sneer at, carried to his grave; and died simple, but wise; honest, but rich; rich in money, in credit, in honor, and eternal hopes; O Skinner! Skinner! I wish I had never been born."

Skinner was surprised; he was not aware that intelli-

gent men, who sin, are subject to fits of remorse ; nay, more, he was frightened ; for the emotion of this iron man, so hard to move, was overpowering when it came ; it did not soften, it convulsed him.

“ Don't talk so, sir,” said the little clerk. “ Keep up your heart ! Have a drop of something.”

“ You are right,” said Mr. Hardie, gloomily ; “ it is idle to talk ; we are all the slaves of circumstances.”

With this, he unlocked a safe that stood against the wall, chucked the fourteen thousand pounds in, and slammed the iron door sharply ; and, as it closed upon the cash with a clang, the parlor door burst open as if by concert, and David Dodd stood on the threshold, looking terrible. His ruddy color was all gone, and he seemed black and white with anger and anxiety. And out of this blanched, yet lowering face, his eyes glowed like coals, and roved keenly to and fro between the banker and the clerk.

A thunder-cloud of a man.

CHAPTER XVI.

JAMES MAXLEY came out of the bank that morning with nine hundred and four pounds buttoned up tight in the pocket of his leather breeches, a joyful man; and so to his work; and home at one o'clock to dinner.

At two P.M., he was thoughtful; uneasy at three; wretched at 3.30.

He was gardener as well as capitalist; and Mr. Hardie owed him thirty shillings for work.

Such is human nature in general, and Maxley's in particular, that the nine hundred pounds in pocket seemed small, and the thirty shillings in jeopardy, large.

"I can't afford to go with the creditors," argued Maxley; "dividend on thirty shillings? why, that will be about thirty pence; the change for a hard¹ half-crown."

He stuck his spade in the soil, and made for his debtor's house. As he came up the street, Dodd shot out of the bank, radiant, and was about to pass him without notice, full of his wife and children; but Maxley stopped him with a right cordial welcome, and told him he had given them all a fright this time.

"What, is it over the town already, that my ship has been wrecked?" And Dodd looked annoyed.

"Wrecked? No; but you have been due this two months, ye know. Wrecked? Why, captain, you haven't ever been wrecked?" And he looked him all over as if he expected to see "WRECKED" branded on him by the elements.

¹ i. e., a half-crown in one piece.

“Ay, James, wrecked on the French coast, and lost my chronometer, and a tiptop sextant. But what of that? I saved *It*. I have just landed *It* in the bank. Good-by; I must sheer off; I long to be home.”

“Stay a bit, captain,” said Maxley; “I am not quite easy in my mind. I saw you come out of Hardie’s; I thought in course you had been in to draa; but you says different. Now, what was it you did leave behind you at that there shop, if *you* please: not money?”

“Not money? Only fourteen thousand pounds. How the man stares! Why, it’s not mine, James; it’s my children’s; there, good-by;” and he was actually off this time. But Maxley stretched his long limbs, and caught him in two strides, and griped his shoulder without ceremony. “Be you mad?” said he, sternly.

“No; but I begin to think you are.”

“That is to be seen,” said Maxley, gravely. “Before I lets you go, you must tell me whether you be jesting, or whether you have really been so simple as to drop fourteen — thousand — pounds at Hardie’s?” No judge upon the bench, nor bishop in his stall, could be more impressive than this gardener was, when he subdued the vast volume of his voice to a low, grave utterance of this sort.

Dodd began to be uneasy. “Why, good heavens, there is nothing wrong with the old Barkington bank?”

“Nothing wrong?” roared Maxley; then whispered, “Holt! I was laad once for slander, and cost me thirty pounds; nearly killed my missus it did.”

“Man!” cried Dodd, “for my children’s sake tell me if you know anything amiss. After all, I’m like a stranger here; more than two years away at a time.”

“I’ll tell you all I know,” whispered Maxley, “’tis the least I can do. What (roaring) do — you — think — I’ve forgotten you saving my poor boy out o’ that scrape, and

getting him a good place in Canada, and — why, he'd have been put in prison but for you, and that would ha' broken my heart and his mother's — and " — The stout voice began to quaver.

"Oh, bother all that now," said Dodd, impatiently. "The bank! you have grounded me on thorns."

"Well, I'll tell ye; but you must promise faithful not to go and say I told ye, or you'll get me laad again; and I likes to laa *them*, not for *they* to laa me."

"I promise, I promise."

"Well then, I got a letter to-day from my boy, him as you was so good to, and here 'tis in my breeches pocket. — Laws! how things do come round surely; why, lookee here now; if so be *you* hadn't been a good friend to *he*, *he* wouldn't be where he is: and if so be *he* warn't where *he* is, *he* couldn't have writ *me* this here, and then where should *you* and *I* be?"

"Belay your jaw, and show me this letter," cried David, trembling all over.

"That I wool," said Maxley, diving a hand into his pocket. "Hush! lookee yander now; if there ain't Master Alfred a-watchin' of us two out of his window; and he have got an eye like a hawk, *he* have. Step in the passage, captain, and I'll show it you."

He drew him aside into the passage, and gave him the letter. Dodd ran his eye over it hastily, uttered a cry like a wounded lion, dropped it, gave a slight stagger, and rushed away.

Maxley picked up his letter, and watched Dodd into the bank again; and reflected on his work. His heart was warmed at having made a return to the good captain.

His head suggested that he was on the road which leads to libel.

But he had picked up at the assizes a smattering of the law of evidence; so he coolly tore the letter in

pieces. "There now," said he to himself, "if Hardies do laa me for publishing of this here letter, why, they pours their water into a sieve. Ugh!" And with this exclamation he started, and then put his heavy boot on part of the letter, and ground it furtively into the mud; for a light hand had settled on his shoulder, and a keen young face was close to his.

It was Alfred Hardie, who had stolen on him like a cat. "I'm laad," thought Maxley.

"Maxley, old fellow," said Alfred, in a voice as coaxing as a woman's, "are you in a good humor?"

"Well, Master Halfred, sight of you mostly puts me in one, especially after that there strychnine job."

"Then tell me," whispered Alfred, his eyes sparkling, and his face beaming, "who was that you were talking to just now? — was it — wasn't it — who was it?"

CHAPTER XVII.

WHILE Dodd stood lowering in the doorway, he was nevertheless making a great effort to control his agitation.

At last he said in a stern but low voice, in which, however, a quick ear might detect a tremor of agitation, "I have changed my mind, sir; I want my money back."

At this, though David's face had prepared him, Mr. Hardie's heart sank; but there was no help for it; he said faintly, "Certainly. May I ask"—and there he stopped; for it was hardly prudent to ask anything.

"No matter," replied Dodd, his agitation rising even at this slight delay; "come! my money! I must and will have it."

Hardie drew himself up majestically. "Captain Dodd, this is a strange way of demanding what nobody here disputes."

"Well, I beg your pardon," said Dodd, a little awed by his dignity and fairness: "but I can't help it."

The quick, supple banker saw the slight advantage he had gained, and his mind went into a whirl; what should he do? It was death to part with this money and gain nothing by it; sooner tell Dodd of the love affair, and open a treaty on this basis; he clung to this money like limpet to its rock; and so intense and rapid were his thoughts and schemes how to retain it a little longer, that David's apologies buzzed in his ear like the drone of a beetle.

The latter went on to say, "You see, sir, it's my chil-

dren's fortune, my boy Edward's and my little Julia's; and so many have been trying to get it from me, that my blood boils up in a moment about it now. — My poor head! — You don't seem to understand what I am saying! there then, I am a sailor; I can't go beating and tacking, like you landsmen, with the wind dead astarn; the long and the short is, I don't feel it safe here; don't feel it safe anywhere, except in my wife's lap. So no more words; here's your receipt; give me my money."

"Certainly, Captain Dodd. Call to-morrow morning at the bank, and it will be paid on demand in the regular way; the bank opens at ten o'clock."

"No, no; I can't wait. I should be dead of anxiety before then. Why not pay it me here, and now? You took it here."

"We receive deposits till four o'clock; but we do not disburse after three. This is the system of all banks."

"That is all nonsense; if you are open to receive money, you are open to pay it."

"My dear sir, if you were not entirely ignorant of business, you would be aware that these things are not done in this way; money received is passed to account, and the cashier is the only person who can honor your draft on it: but, stop; if the cashier is in the bank, we may manage it for you yet; Skinner, run and see whether he has left; and, if not, send him to me directly." The cashier took his cue, and ran out.

David was silent.

The cashier speedily returned, saying, with a disappointed air, "The cashier has been gone this quarter of an hour."

David maintained an ominous silence.

"That is unfortunate," remarked Hardie. "But, after all, it is only till to-morrow morning: still I regret this circumstance, sir; and I feel that all these precautions

we are obliged to take must seem unreasonable to you: but experience dictates this severe routine; and, were we to deviate from it, our friends' money would not be so safe in our hands as it always has been at present."

David eyed him sternly, but let him run on. When he had concluded his flowing periods, David said quietly, "So you can't give me **my own** because your cashier has carried it away?"

Hardie smiled: "No, no; but because he has locked it up, and carried away the key."

"It is not in this room, then?"

"No."

"Are you sure?"

"Positive."

"What, not in that safe of yours, there?"

"Certainly not," said Hardie, stoutly.

"Open the safe: the keys are in it."

"Open the safe? What for?"

"To show me it is not in the right-hand partition of that safe; there: there." And David pointed at the very place where it was.

The dignified Mr. Hardie felt ready to sink with shame: a kind of shudder passed through him, and he was about to comply, heart-sick: but then wounded pride and the rage of disappointment stung him, and he turned in defiance: "You are impertinent, sir: and I shall not reward your curiosity and your insolence by showing you the contents of my safes."

"My money! my money!" cried David, fiercely: "no more words, for I sha'n't listen to them: I know you now for what you are! a thief! I *saw* you put it into that safe: a liar is always a thief. You want to steal my children's money: I'll have your life first. My money, ye pirate, or I'll strangle you!" And he advanced upon him purple with rage, and shot out his long



HARDIE GOT THE NOTES AND BILLS ALL IN A HURRY.

threatening arm, and brown fingers working in the air. "D'ye know what I did to a French land-shark that tried to rob me of it? I throttled him with these fingers till his eyes and his tongue started out of him; he came for my children's money, and I killed him so — so — as I'll kill you, you thief! you liar! you scoundrel!"

His face black and convulsed with rage, and his outstretched fingers working convulsively, and hungering for a rogue's throat, made the resolute Hardie quake; he whipped out of the furious man's way, and got to the safe, pale and trembling. "Hush! no violence!" he gasped: "I'll give you your money this moment, you ruffian."

While he unlocked the safe with trembling hands, Dodd stood like a man petrified: his arm and fingers stretched out and threatening; and Skinner saw him pull at his necktie furiously, like one choking.

Hardie got the notes and bills all in a hurry, and held them out to Dodd.

In which act, to his consternation, and surprise, and indignation, he received a back-handed blow on the eye that dazzled him for an instant; and there was David with his arms struggling wildly, and his fists clenched, his face purple, and his eyes distorted so that little was seen but the whites; the next moment his teeth gnashed loudly together, and he fell headlong on the floor with a concussion so momentous, that the windows rattled, and the room shook violently; the dust rose in a cloud.

A loud ejaculation burst from Hardie and Skinner.

And then there was an awful silence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHEN David fell senseless on the floor, Mr. Hardie was somewhat confused by the back-handed blow from his convulsed and whirling arm. But Skinner ran to him, held up his head, and whipped off his neckcloth.

Then Hardie turned to seize the bell and ring for assistance; but Skinner shook his head and said it was useless; this was no faint: old Betty could not help him.

"It is a bad day's work, sir," said he, trembling: "he is a dead man."

"Dead? Heaven forbid!"

"Apoplexy!" whispered Skinner.

"Run for a doctor then: lose no time: don't let us have his blood on our hands. Dead?"

And he repeated the word this time in a very different tone; a tone too strange and significant to escape Skinner's quick ear. However, he laid David's head gently down, and rose from his knees to obey.

What did he see now, but Mr. Hardie, with his back turned, putting the notes and bills softly into the safe again out of sight! He saw, comprehended, and took his own course with equal rapidity.

"Come, run!" cried Mr. Hardie; "I'll take care of him; every moment is precious."

"Wants to get rid of me!" thought Skinner. "No, sir," said he, "be ruled by me: let us take him to his friends: he won't live; and we shall get all the blame if we doctor him."

Already egotism had whispered Hardie, "How lucky if he should die!" and now a still guiltier thought

flashed through him: he did not try to conquer it; he only trembled at himself for entertaining it.

“At least give him air!” said he, in a quavering voice, consenting in a crime, yet compromising with his conscience, feebly.

He threw the window open with great zeal, with prodigious zeal: for he wanted to deceive himself as well as Skinner. With equal parade he helped carry Dodd to the window; it opened on the ground: this done, the self-deceivers put their heads together, and soon managed matters so that two porters, known to Skinner, were introduced into the garden, and informed that a gentleman had fallen down in a fit, and they were to take him home to his friends, and not talk about it: there might be an inquest, and that was so disagreeable to a gentleman like Mr. Hardie. The men agreed at once for a sovereign apiece. It was all done in a great hurry and agitation, and while Skinner accompanied the men to see that they did not blab, Mr. Hardie went into the garden to breathe and think. But he could do neither.

He must have a look at it.

He stole back, opened the safe, and examined the notes and bills.

He fingered them.

They seemed to grow to his finger.

He lusted after them.

He said to himself, “The matter has gone too far to stop; I *must* go on borrowing this money of the Dodds, and make it the basis of a large fortune: it will be best for all parties in the end.”

He put it into his pocket-book; that pocket-book into his breast-pocket; and passed by his private door into the house: and to his dressing-room.

Ten minutes later he left the house with a little black bag in his hand.

CHAPTER XIX.

“WHAT will ye give me, and I’ll tell ye?” said Maxley to Alfred Hardie.

“Five pounds.”

“That is too much.”

“Five shillings, then.”

“That is too little. Lookee here; your garden owes me thirty shillings for work: suppose you pays me, and that will save me from going to your dad for it.”

Alfred consented readily, and paid the money. Then Maxley told him it was Captain Dodd he had been talking with.

“I thought so! I thought so!” cried Alfred, joyfully, “but I was afraid to believe it: it was too delightful: Maxley, you’re a trump: you don’t know what anxiety you have relieved me of; some fool has gone and reported the Agra wrecked; look here!” and he showed him his Lloyd’s; “luckily it has only just come; so I haven’t been miserable long.”

“Well, to be sure, news flies fast nowadays. He *have* been wrecked, for that matter.” He then surprised Alfred by telling him all he had just learned from Dodd; and was going to let out about the fourteen thousand pounds, when he recollected this was the banker’s son, and while he was talking to him, it suddenly struck Maxley that this young gentleman would come down in the world, should the bank break: and then the Dodds, he concluded, judging others by himself, would be apt to turn their backs on him. Now he liked Alfred, and was disposed to do him a good turn,

when he could without hurting James Maxley. "Mr. Alfred," said he, "I know the world better than you do: you be ruled by me, or you'll rue it: you put on your Sunday coat this minute, and off like a shot to Albyn Villee; you'll get there before the captain: he have got a little business to do first; that is neither here nor there; besides, you are young and lissom. You be the first to tell Missus Dodd the good news; and, when the captain comes, there sets you aside Miss Julee: and don't you be shy and shamefaced: take him when his heart is warm, and tell him why you are there: 'I love her dear,' says you. He be only a sailor, and they never has no sense nor prudence: he is a'most sure to take you by the hand, at such a time: and once you get his word, he'll stand good, to his own hurt; he's one of that sort, bless his silly old heart."

A good deal of this was unintelligible to Alfred; but the advice seemed good; advice generally does when it squares with our own wishes: he thanked Maxley, left him, made a hasty toilet, and ran to Albion Villa.

Sarah opened the door to him; in tears.

The news of the wreck had come to Albion Villa just half an hour ago; and in that half-hour they had tasted more misery than hitherto their peaceful lot had brought them in years. Mrs. Dodd was praying and crying in her room; Julia had put on her bonnet, and was descending in deep distress and agitation, to go down to the quay and learn more if possible.

Alfred saw her on the stairs, and at sight of her pale, agitated face, flew to her.

She held out both hands piteously to him: "O Alfred!"

"Good news!" he panted. "He is alive; Maxley has seen him — I have seen him — he will be here directly — my own love, dry your eyes — calm your fears — he is safe; he is well: hurrah! hurrah!"

The girl's pale face flushed red with hope, then pale again with emotion, then rosy red with transcendent joy: "Oh, bless you! bless you!" she murmured, in her sweet gurgle so full of heart: then took his head passionately with both her hands, as if she was going to kiss him: uttered a little inarticulate cry of love and gratitude over him, then turned and flew up the stairs, crying "Mamma! mamma!" and burst into her mother's room. When two such impetuosities meet as Alfred and Julia, expect quick work.

What happened in Mrs. Dodd's room may be imagined: and soon both ladies came hastily out to Alfred, and he found himself in the drawing-room seated between them, and holding a hand of each, and playing the man delightfully, soothing and assuring them; Julia believed him at a word, and beamed with unmixed delight and anticipation of the joyful meeting; Mrs. Dodd cost him more trouble: her soft hand trembled still in his; and she put question upon question. But, when he told her he with his own eyes had seen Captain Dodd talking to Maxley, and gathered from Maxley he had been shipwrecked on the coast of France, and lost his chronometer and his sextant, these details commanded credit; bells were rung: the captain's dressing-room ordered to be got ready; the cook put on her mettle, and Alfred invited to stay and dine with the long-expected one: and the house of mourning became the house of joy.

"And then it was he who brought the good news," whispered Julia to her mother; "and that is so sweet."

"Yes, dear," said Mrs. Dodd; "he will make even me love him. The fourteen thousand pounds! I hope that was not lost in the wreck."

"O mamma, who cares? when his own dear, sweet, precious life has been in danger, and is mercifully preserved. Why does he not come? I shall scold him for

keeping us waiting: you know I am not a bit afraid of him, though he is papa: indeed, I am ashamed to say I govern him with a rod of — no matter what. Do, do, do let us all three put on our bonnets, and run and meet him. I want him so to love somebody the very first day.”

Mrs Dodd said, “Well, wait a few minutes, and then if he is not here you two shall go. I dare hardly trust myself to meet my darling husband in the open street.”

Julia ran to Alfred: “If he does not come in ten minutes, you and I may go and meet him.”

“You are an angel,” murmured Alfred.

“You are another,” said Julia, haughtily. “Oh, dear! I can’t sit down, and I don’t want flattery: I want papa. A waltz! a waltz! then one can go mad with joy without startling propriety: I can’t answer for the consequences if I don’t let off a little, little happiness.”

“That I will,” said Mrs. Dodd, “for I am as happy as you, and happier.” She played a waltz.

Julia’s eyes were a challenge. Alfred started up and took her ready hand, and soon the gay young things were whirling round, — the happiest pair in England.

But in the middle of the joyous whirl, Julia’s quick ear, on the watch all the time, heard the gate swing to: she glided like an eel from Alfred’s arm, and ran to the window. Arrived there, she made three swift vertical bounds like a girl with a skipping-rope, only her hands were clapping in the air at the same time; then down the stairs, screaming, “His chest! his chest! he is coming, coming, come.”

Alfred ran after her.

Mrs. Dodd, unable to race with such antelopes, slipped quietly out into the little balcony.

Julia had seen two men carrying a trestle with a tarpaulin over it, and a third walking beside. Dodd’s

heavy sea-chest had been more than once carried home this way. She met the men at the door, and overpowered them with questions.

“Is it his clothes? then he wasn’t so much wrecked after all. Is he with you? is he coming directly? Why don’t you tell me?”

The porters at first wore the stolid, impassive faces of their tribe, but, when this bright young creature questioned them, brimming over with ardor and joy, their countenances fell, and they hung their heads.

The little, sharp-faced man, who was walking beside the other, stepped forward to reply to Julia.

He was interrupted by a terrible scream from the balcony.

Mrs. Dodd was leaning wildly over it, with dilating eyes and quivering hand that pointed down to the other side of the trestle: “Julia! Julia!”

Julia ran round, and stood petrified, her pale lips apart, and all her innocent joy frozen in a moment.

The tarpaulin was scanty there, and a man’s hand and part of his arm dangled helpless out.

The hand was blanched, and wore a well-known ring.

CHAPTER XX.

IN the terror and confusion no questions were then asked. Alfred got to David's head, and told Skinner to take his feet: Mrs. Dodd helped, and they carried him up and laid him on her bed. The servant-girls cried, and wailed, and were of little use; Mrs. Dodd hurried them off for medical aid, and she and Julia, though pale as ghosts, and trembling in every limb, were tearless, and almost silent, and did all for the best. They undid a shirt-button that confined his throat; they set his head high, and tried their poor little eau-de-Cologne and feminine remedies; and each of them held an insensible hand in both hers, clasping it piteously and trying to hold him tight, so that Death should not take him away from them.

"My son, where is my son?" sighed Mrs. Dodd.

Alfred threw his arm round her neck. "You have one son here: what shall I do?"

The next minute he was running to the telegraph-office for her.

At the gate he found Skinner hanging about, and asked him hurriedly how the calamity had happened. Skinner said Captain Dodd had fallen down senseless in the street, and he had passed soon after, recognized him, and brought him home. "I have paid the men, sir: I wouldn't let them ask the ladies at such a time."

"Oh, thank you! thank you, Skinner! I will repay you: it is me you have obliged." And Alfred ran off with the words in his mouth.

Skinner looked after him and muttered, "I forgot

him. It is a nice mess: wish I was out of it." And he went back, hanging his head, to Alfred's father.

Mr. Osmond met him. Skinner turned and saw him enter the villa.

Mr. Osmond came softly into the room, examined Dodd's eye, felt his pulse, and said he must be bled at once.

Mrs. Dodd was averse to this. "Oh, let us try everything else first," said she; but Osmond told her there was no other remedy. "All the functions we rely on in the exhibition of medicines are suspended."

Dr. Short now drove up, and was ushered in.

Mrs. Dodd asked him imploringly whether it was necessary to bleed. But Dr. Short knew his business too well to be entrapped into an independent opinion where a surgeon had been before him. He drew Mr. Osmond apart, and inquired what he had recommended; this ascertained, he turned to Mrs. Dodd and said, "I advise venesection or cupping."

"O Dr. Short, pray have pity, and order something less terrible. Dr. Sampson is so averse to bleeding."

"Sampson? Sampson? never heard of him."

"It is the chronothermal man," said Osmond.

"Oh, ah! but this is too serious a case to be quacked. Coma, with stertor, and a full, bounding pulse, indicates liberal blood-letting. I would try venesection, then cup, if necessary, or leech the temple. I need not say, sir, calomel must complete the cure. The case is simple, and, at present, surgical; I leave it in competent hands." And he retired, leaving the inferior practitioner well pleased with him and with himself, — no insignificant part of a physician's art.

When he was gone, Mr. Osmond told Mrs. Dodd that however crotchety Dr. Sampson might be, he was an able man, and had very properly resisted the indiscrimi-

nate use of the lancet: the profession owed him much. "But in apoplexy the leech and the lancet are still our sheet anchors."

Mrs. Dodd uttered a faint shriek. "Apoplexy! O David! Oh, my darling! have you come home for this?"

Osmond assured her apoplexy was not necessarily fatal, provided the cerebral blood-vessels were relieved in time by depletion.

The fixed eye, and terrible stertorous breathing on the one hand, and the promise of relief on the other, overpowered Mrs. Dodd's reluctance. She sent Julia out of the room on a pretext, and then consented with tears to David's being bled. But she would not yield to leave the room; no, this tender woman nerved herself to see her husband's blood flow, sooner than risk his being bled too much by the hard hand of custom. Let the peevish fools, who make their own troubles in love, compare their slight and merited pangs with this: she was his true lover and his wife, yet there she stood with eye horror-stricken yet unflinching, and saw the stab of the little lancet, and felt it deeper than she would a javelin through her own body, and watched the blood run that was dearer to her than her own.

At the first prick of the lancet David shivered, and, as the blood escaped, his eye unfixed, and the pupils contracted and dilated, and once he sighed. "Good sign that," said Osmond.

"Oh, that is enough, sir," said Mrs. Dodd: "we shall faint if you take any more."

Osmond closed the vein, observing that a local bleeding would do the rest. When he had stanch'd the blood, Mrs. Dodd sank half fainting in her chair; by some marvellous sympathy it was she who had been bled, and whose vein was now closed. Osmond sprinkled water

in her face : she thanked him, and said sweetly, "You see I could not have lost any more."

When it was over she came to tell Julia ; she found her sitting on the stairs crying, and pale as marble. She suspected. And there was Alfred hanging over her, and in agony at her grief : out came his love for her in words and accents unmistakable, and this in Osmond's hearing and the maid's.

"Oh, hush ! hush !" cried poor Mrs. Dodd, and her face was seen to burn through her tears.

And this was the happy, quiet little villa of my opening chapters.

Ah, Richard Hardie ! Richard Hardie !

The patient was cupped on the nape of the neck by Mr. Osmond, and, on the glasses drawing, showed signs of consciousness, and the breathing was relieved ; these favorable symptoms were neither diminished nor increased by the subsequent application of the cupping needles.

"We have turned the corner," said Mr. Osmond, cheerfully.

Rap, rap, rap came a telegraphic message from Dr. Sampson, and was brought up to the sickroom.

"Out visiting patients when yours came. In apoplexy with a red face and stertorous breathing, put the feet in mustard bath and dash much cold water on the head from above. On revival give emetic ; cure with sulphate of quinine. In apoplexy with a white face, treat as for a simple faint : here emetic dangerous. In neither apoplexy bleed. Coming down by train."

This message added to Mrs. Dodd's alarm, the whole treatment varied so far from what had been done. She faltered her misgivings : Osmond reassured her. "Not bleed in apoplexy !" said he superciliously ; "why, it is

the universal practice. Judge for yourself. You see the improvement." Mrs. Dodd admitted it.

"Then as to the cold water," said Osmond, "I would hardly advise so rough a remedy. And he is going on so well. But you can send for ice, and, meantime, give me a good-sized stocking."

He cut and fitted it adroitly to the patient's head, then drenched it with eau-de-Cologne, and soon the head began to steam.

By and by David muttered a few incoherent words; and the anxious watchers thanked God aloud for them.

At length Mr. Osmond took leave with a cheerful countenance, and left them all grateful to him, and with a high opinion of his judgment and skill, especially Julia. She said Dr. Sampson was very amusing to talk to, but she should be sorry to trust to that rash, reckless, boisterous man in time of danger.

About two in the morning a fly drove rapidly up to the villa, and Sampson got out.

He found David pale and muttering, and his wife and children hanging over him in deep distress.

He shook hands with them in silence, and eyed the patient keenly. He took the nightcap off, removed the pillows, lowered his head, and said quietly, "This is the cold fit come on: we must not shut our eyes on the pashint. Why, what is this? he has been cupped!" And Sampson changed color, and his countenance fell.

Mrs. Dodd saw, and began to tremble. "I could not hear from you; and Dr. Short and Mr. Osmond felt quite sure; and he seems better. O Dr. Sampson, why were you not here? We have bled him as well. Oh, don't, don't, don't say it was wrong! He would have died: they said so. O David! David! your wife has killed you." And she knelt and kissed his hand and implored his pardon, insensible.

Julia clung sobbing to her mother, in a vain attempt to comfort her.

Sampson groaned.

"No, no," said he: "don't go on so, my poor soul; you did all for the best; and now we must make the best of what is done. Hartshorn! brandy! and caution. For those two assassins have tied my hands."

While applying these timid remedies, he inquired if the cause was known. They told him they knew nothing, but that David had been wrecked on the coast of France, and had fallen down senseless in the street: a clerk of Mr. Hardie's had recognized him, and brought him home, so Alfred said.

"Then the cause is mintal," said Sampson, "unless he got a blow on the hid in bein' wrecked."

He then examined David's head carefully, and found a long scar.

"But this is not it," said he; "this is old."

Mrs. Dodd clasped her hands, and assured him it was new to her: her David had no scar there when he left her last.

Pursuing his examination, Sampson found an open wound in his left shoulder.

He showed it them, and they were all as pale as the patient in a moment. He then asked to see his coat, and soon discovered a corresponding puncture in it, which he examined long and narrowly.

"It is a stab — with a one-edged knife."

There was a simultaneous cry of horror.

"Don't alarm yourselves for that," said Sampson, "it is nothing; a mere flesh-wound. It is the vein-wound that alarms me. This school knows nothing about the paroxysms and remissions of disease. They have bled and cupped him for a *passing fit*. It has passed into the cold stage, but no quicker than it would have done with

out stealing a drop of blood. To-morrow, by disease's nature, he will have another hot fit in spite of their bleeding. Then those ijits would leech his temples; and on that paroxysm remitting by the nature of disease, would fancy their leeches had cured it."

The words were the old words, but the tone and manner were so different; no shouting, no anger; all was spoken low and gently, and with a sort of sad and weary and worn-out air.

He ordered a kettle of hot water and a quantity of mustard, and made his preparations for the hot fit, as he called it, maintaining the intermittent and febrile character of all disease.

The patient rambled a good deal, but quite incoherently, and knew nobody.

But about eight o'clock in the morning he was quite quiet, and apparently sleeping; so Mrs. Dodd stole out of the room to order some coffee for Sampson and Edward. They were nodding, worn out with watching.

Julia, whose high-strung nature could dispense with sleep on such an occasion, was on her knees praying for her father.

Suddenly there came from the bed, like a thunder-clap, two words uttered loud and furiously:—

"HARDIE! VILLAIN!"

Up started the drowsy watchers, and rubbed their eyes. They had heard the sound but not the sense.

Julia rose from her knees bewildered and aghast; she had caught the strange words distinctly; words that were to haunt her night and day.

They were followed immediately by a loud groan; and the stertorous breathing recommenced, and the face was no longer pale, but flushed and turgid. On this Sampson hurried Julia from the room, and, with Edward's help, placed David on a stool in the bath, and getting on a

chair, discharged half a bucket of cold water on his head; the patient gasped; another, and David shuddered, stared wildly, and put his hand to his head; a third, and he staggered to his feet.

At this moment, Mrs. Dodd coming hastily into the room, he looked steadily at her and said, "Lucy!"

She ran to throw her arms round him, but Sampson interfered: "Gently! gently!" said he; "we must have no violent emotions."

"Oh, no! I will be prudent." And she stood quiet with her arms still extended, and cried for joy.

They got David to bed again, and Sampson told Mrs. Dodd there was no danger now from the malady, but only from the remedies.

And, in fact, David fell into a state of weakness and exhaustion, and kept muttering unintelligibly.

Dr. Short called in the morning, and was invited to consult with Dr. Sampson. He declined. "Dr. Sampson is a notorious quack; no physician of any eminence will meet him in consultation."

"I regret that resolution," said Mrs. Dodd, quietly, "as it will deprive me of the advantage of your skill."

Dr. Short bowed stiffly: "I shall be at your service, madam, when that empiric has given the patient up." And he drove away.

Osmond, finding Sampson installed, took the politic line; he contrived to glide by fine gradations into the empiric's opinions, without recanting his own, which were diametrically opposed.

Sampson, before he shot back to town, asked him to provide a good, reliable nurse.

He sent a young woman of iron; she received Sampson's instructions, and assumed the command of the sick-room, and was jealous of Mrs. Dodd and Julia; looked on them as mere rival nurses, amateurs, who, if not

snubbed, might ruin the professionals; she seemed to have forgotten in the hospitals all about the family affections, and their power of turning invalids themselves into nurses.

The second night she got the patient all to herself for four hours; from eleven till two.

The ladies having consented to this arrangement, in order to recruit themselves for the work they were not so mad as to intrust wholly to a hireling, nurse's feathers smoothed themselves perceptibly.

At twelve the patient was muttering and murmuring incessantly about wrecks and money and things; of which vain babble, nurse showed her professional contempt by nodding.

At 12.30 she slept.

At 1.20 she snored very loud, and woke instantly at the sound.

She took the thief out of the candle, and went like a good sentinel to look at her charge.

He was not there.

She rubbed her eyes, and held the candle over the place where he ought to be, where, in fact, he must be; for he was far too weak to move.

She tore the bedclothes down; she beat and patted the clothes with her left hand, and the candle began to shake violently in her right.

The bed was empty.

Mrs. Dodd was half asleep, when a hurried tap came to her door; she started up in a moment, and great dread fell on her; was David sinking?

"Ma'am! Ma'am! Is he here?"

"He! Who?" cried Mrs. Dodd, bewildered.

"Why, *him!* he can't be far off."

In a moment Mrs. Dodd had opened the door; and her tongue and the nurse's seemed to clash together, so fast

came the agitated words from each in turn; and crying, "Call my son! Alarm the house!" Mrs. Dodd darted into the sickroom. She was out again in a moment, and up in the attics rousing the maids, while the nurse thundered at Edward's door, and Julia's, and rang every bell she could get at. The inmates were soon alarmed, and flinging on their clothes; meantime Mrs. Dodd and the nurse scoured the house and searched every nook in it down to the very cellar; they found no David.

But they found something.

The street door ajar.

It was a dark, drizzly night.

Edward took one road, Mrs. Dodd and Elizabeth another.

They were no sooner gone, than Julia drew the nurse into a room apart, and asked her eagerly if her father had said nothing.

"Said nothing, miss? Why, he was a-talking all the night incessant."

"Did he say anything particular? think now."

"No, miss; he went on as they all do just before a change. I never minds 'em; I hear so much of it."

"O nurse, nurse! have pity on me; try and recollect."

"Well, miss, to oblige you, then; it was mostly fights this time — and wrecks — and villains — and bankers — and sharks."

"Bankers?" asked Julia eagerly.

"Yes, miss; and villains, they come once or twice, but most of the time it was sharks and ships and money, and — hotch-potch I call it, the way they talk; bless your heart, they know no better; everything they ever saw or read or heard tell of, it all comes out higgledy-piggledy just before they goes off; we that makes it a business never takes no notice of what they says, miss; and never

repeats it out of one sick-house into another; that you *may* rely on."

Julia scarcely heard this; her hands were tight to her brow as if to aid her to think with all her force.

The result was, she told Sarah to put on her bonnet, and rushed up-stairs.

She was not gone three minutes; but in that short interval the nurse's tongue and Sarah's clashed together swiftly and incessantly.

Julia heard them. She came down with a long cloak on, whipped the hood over her head, beckoned Sarah quickly, and darted out. Sarah followed instinctively, but, ere they had gone many yards from the house, said, "O miss, nurse thinks you had much better not go."

"Nurse thinks! Nurse thinks! What does she know of me and my griefs?"

"Why, miss, she is a very experienced woman, and she says — Oh, dear! oh, dear! And such a dark, cold night for you to be out!"

"Nurse? Nurse? What did she say?"

"Oh, I haven't the heart to tell you; if you would but come back home with me! She says as much as that poor master's troubles will be over long before we can get to him." And with this Sarah burst out sobbing.

"Come quicker," cried Julia, despairingly. But after awhile she said, "Tell me; only don't stop me."

"Miss, she says she nursed Mr. Campbell, the young curate that died last harvest-time but one, you know; and he lay just like master, and she expecting a change every hour; and O miss, she met him coming down-stairs in his night-gownd, and he said, 'Nurse, I am all right now,' says he, and died momentarily in her arms at the stair-foot. And she nursed an old farmer that lay as weak as master, and, just when they looked for him to go, lo and behold him dressed and out digging potatoes,

and fell down dead before they could get hands on him mostly ; and nurse have a friend, that have seen more than she have, which she is older than nurse, and says a body's life is all one as a rushlight, flares up strong momentarily justly before it goes out altogether. Dear heart, wherever are we going to in the middle of the night ? ”

“ Don't you see ? to the quay. ”

“ Oh, don't go there, miss, whatever ! I can't abide the sight of the water, when a body's in trouble. ” Here a drunken man confronted them, and asked them if they wanted a beau ; and, on their slipping past him in silence, followed them, and offered repeatedly to treat them. Julia moaned, and hurried faster. “ O miss, ” said Sarah, “ what could you expect, coming out at this time of night ? I'm sure the breath is all out of me ; you do tear along so. ”

“ Tear ? we are crawling. Ah, Sarah, you are not his daughter. There, follow me ! I cannot go so slow. ” And she set off to run.

Presently she passed a group of women standing talking at a corner of the street ; and windows were open with nightcapped heads framed in them.

She stopped a moment to catch the words ; they were talking about a ghost which was said to have just passed down the street, and discussing whether it was a real ghost, or a trick to frighten people.

Julia uttered a low cry, and redoubled her speed, and was soon at Mr. Richard Hardie's door ; but the street was deserted, and she was bewildered, and began to think she had been too hasty in her conjecture. A chill came over her impetuosity. The dark, drizzly, silent night, the tall masts, the smell of the river, how strange it all seemed ; and she to be there alone at such an hour.

Presently she heard voices somewhere near. She

crossed over to a passage that seemed to lead towards them; and then she heard the voices plainly, and among them one that did not mingle with the others, for it was the voice she loved. She started back and stood irresolute. Would he be displeased with her?

Feet came trampling slowly along the passage.

His voice came with them.

She drew back and looked round for Sarah.

While she stood fluttering, the footsteps came close, and there emerged from the passage into the full light of the gas-lamp Alfred and two policemen, carrying a silent, senseless figure, in a nightgown, with a great-coat thrown over part of him.

It was her father; mute and ghastly.

The policemen still tell of that strange meeting under the gas-light by Hardie's Bank; and how the young lady flung her arms round her father's head, and took him for dead, and kissed his pale cheeks, and moaned over him; and how the young gentleman raised her against her will, and sobbed over her; and how they, though policemen, cried like children. And to them I must refer the reader: I have not the skill to convey the situation.

They got more policemen to help, and carried him to Albion Villa.

On the way something cold and mysterious seemed to have come between Julia and Alfred. They walked apart in gloomy silence broken only by foreboding sighs.

I pass over the tempest of emotions under which that sad burden entered Albion Villa; and hurry to the next marked event.

Next day the patient had lost his extreme pallor, and wore a certain uniform sallow hue; and at noon, just before Sampson's return, he opened his eyes wide, and fixed them on Mrs. Dodd and Julia, who were now his nurses. They hailed this with delight, and held their

breath to hear him speak to them the first sweet words of reviving life and love.

But soon to their surprise and grief they found he did not know them. They spoke to him, each in turn, and told him piteously who they were, and implored him with tears to know them, and to speak to them. But no, he fixed a stony gaze on them that made them shudder; and their beloved voices passed over him like an idle wind.

Sampson, when he came, found the ladies weeping by the bedside.

They greeted him with affection, Julia especially: the boisterous controversialist had come out a gentle, zealous artist, in presence of a real danger.

Dr. Sampson knew nothing of what had happened in his absence. He stepped to the bedside cheerfully; and the ladies' eyes were bent keenly on his face in silence.

He had no sooner cast eyes on David than his countenance fell, and his hard but expressive features filled with concern.

That was enough for Mrs. Dodd; "And he does not know me," she cried: "he does not know my voice. *His* voice would call me back from the grave itself. He is dying. He will never speak to me again. Oh, my poor orphan girl!"

"No! no!" said Sampson, "you are quite mistaken: he will not die. But"—

His tongue said no more. His grave and sombre face spoke volumes.

CHAPTER XXI.

To return to the bank: Skinner came back from the Dodds' that miserable afternoon, in a state of genuine agitation and regret. He was human and therefore mixed; and their desolation had shocked him.

The footman told him Mr. Hardie was not at home; gone to London, he believed. Skinner walked away dejected. What did this mean? Had he left the country?

He smiled at his fears, and felt positive Mr. Hardie had misled the servants, and was quietly waiting for him in the bank parlor.

It was now dusk: he went round to that little dark nook of the garden the parlor-window opened on, and tapped: there was no reply; the room looked empty. He tried the sash: it yielded: Mr. Hardie had been too occupied with embezzling another's property to take common precautions in defence of his own; never in his life before had he neglected to fasten the iron shutters with his own hand, and to-day he had left the very window unfastened. This augured ill. "He is off: he has done me along with the rest," thought Skinner. He stepped into the room, found a lucifer-box, shut the shutters, lighted a candle, and went peering about amongst the banker's papers, to see if he could find a clew to his intentions: and, as he potted and peered, he quaked as well: a detector by dishonest means feels thief-like; and is what he feels. He made some little discoveries, that guided him in his own conduct; he felt more and more sure his employer would outwit him if he could; and resolved it should be diamond cut diamond.

The church clock struck one.

He started at the hour, crept out, and closed the window softly; then away by the garden-gate.

A light was still burning in Alfred's room: and at this Skinner had another touch of compunction; "There is one won't sleep this night along of our work," thought he.

At three next afternoon Mr. Hardie reappeared.

He had gone up to town to change the form of the deposit: he took care to think of it as a deposit still, the act of deposit having been complete, the withdrawal incomplete, and by no fault of his, for he had offered it back; but fate and accident had interposed—he had converted the notes into gold direct, and the bills into gold through notes; this was like going into the river to hide his trail. Next process: he turned his gold into five-hundred-pound notes, and came flying home with them.

His return was greeted by Skinner with a sigh of relief. Hardie heard it, interpreted it aright, and sent for him into the parlor: and there told him with a great affectation of frankness what he had done: then asked significantly if there was any news at Albion Villa.

Skinner in reply told Mr. Hardie of the distress he had witnessed up at Albion Villa; "And, sir," said he, lowering his voice, "Mr. Alfred helped carry the body up-stairs. It is a nice mess altogether, sir, when you come to think."

"Ah! all the better," was the cool reply: "he will be useful to let us know what we want; he will tell Jane, and Jane me. You don't think he will live, do you?"

"Live! no: and then who will know the money is here?"

"Who should know? Did not he say he had just landed, and been shipwrecked? Shipwrecked men do not bring fourteen thousand pounds ashore." The speaker's

eyes sparkled; Skinner watched him demurely. "Skinner," said he, solemnly, "I believe my daughter Jane is right; and that Providence really interferes sometimes in the affairs of this world; you know how I have struggled, to save my family from disgrace and poverty; those struggles have failed in a great degree; but Heaven has seen them, and saved this money from the sea, and dropped it into my very hands to retrieve my fortunes with. I must be grateful; spend a portion of it on charity, and rear a noble fortune on the rest. Confound it all!"

And his crestfallen countenance showed some ugly misgiving had flashed on him quite suddenly.

"What, sir? what?" asked Skinner, eagerly.

"The receipt!"

CHAPTER XXII.

"THE receipt? Oh, is that all? *you* have got that," said Skinner very coolly.

"What makes you think so?" inquired the other, keenly. He instantly suspected Skinner of having it.

"Why, sir, I saw it in his hand."

"Then it has got to Albion Villa, and we are ruined."

"No, no, sir; you won't hear me. I am sure I saw it fall out of his hand when he was taken ill; and I think, but I won't be sure, he fell on it. Any way, there was nothing in his hands when I delivered him at Albion Villa, so it must be here. I dare say you have thrown it into a drawer or somewhere, promiscuously."

"No, no, Skinner," said Mr. Hardie, with increasing alarm; "it is useless for us to deceive ourselves. I was not three minutes in the room, and thought of nothing but getting to town and cashing the bills."

He rang the bell sharply, and on Betty coming in, asked her what she had done with that paper that was on the floor?

"Took it up and put it on the table, sir. This was it, I think." And she laid her finger upon a paper.

"No, no," said Mr. Hardie. "The one I mean was much smaller than that."

"What," said she, with that astonishing memory for trifles people have who never read, "was it a little crumpled-up paper, lying by the basket?"

"Yes, yes; that sounds like it."

"Oh! I put that *into* the basket."

Mr. Hardie's eye fell directly on the basket, but it

was empty. She caught his glance, and told him she had emptied it in the dust-hole as usual. Mr. Hardie uttered an angry exclamation. Betty, an old servant of his wife's, resented it with due dignity by tossing her head as she retired.

"There is no help for it," said Mr. Hardie, bitterly; "we must go and grub in the dust-hole now."

"Why, sir, your name is not on it, after all."

"What does that matter? A man is bound by the act of his agent; besides, it is my form, and my initials on the back. Come, let us put a good face on the thing." And he led the way to the kitchen, and got up a little laugh, and asked the scullery maid if she could show Mr. Skinner and him the dust-hole. She stared, but obeyed, and the pair followed her, making merry.

The dust-hole was empty.

The girl explained: "It is the dustman's day. He came at eleven o'clock in the morning and carr'd all the dust away, and grumbled at the paper and the bones, he did. So I told him beggars mustn't be choosers. Just like his impudence! when he gets it for nothing, and sells it for a mint outside the town." The unwonted visitors left her in dead silence almost before she had finished her sentence.

Mr. Hardie sat down in his parlor, thoroughly discomposed; Skinner watched him furtively.

At last the former broke out: "This is the Devil's doing; the Devil in person. No intelligence nor ability can resist such luck. I almost wish we had never meddled with it. We shall never feel safe, never be safe."

Skinner made light of the matter, treated the receipt as thrown into the sea. "Why, sir," said he, "by this time it will have found its way to that monstrous heap of ashes on the London road, and who will ever look for it there? or notice it if they find it?" Hardie shook

his head. "That monstrous heap is all sold every year to the farmers. That receipt, worth fourteen thousand pounds to me, will be strewed on the soil for manure; then some farmer's man or farmer's boy that goes to the Sunday school will read it, see Captain Dodd's name, and bring it to Albion Villa in hopes of a sixpence,—a sixpence. Heaven help the man who does a doubtful act, and leaves damnatory evidence on paper kicking about the world."

From that hour the cash Hardie carried in his bosom, without a right to it, began to blister.

He thought of telling the dustman he had lost a paper, and setting him to examine the mountain of ashes on the London road; but here caution stepped in. How could he describe the paper without awakening curiosity and defeating his own end? He gave that up. It was better to let the sleeping dog lie.

Finally he resolved to buy security in a world where, after all, one has to buy everything. So he employed an adroit agent, and quietly purchased that mountain, the refuse of all Barkington. But he felt so ill used, he paid for it in his own notes; by this means the treaty reverted to the primitive form of barter,¹ ashes for rags.

This transaction he concealed from his confederate.

When he had completed it, he was not yet secure; for another day had passed, and Captain Dodd alive still. Men often recover from apoplexy, especially when they survive the first twenty-four hours. Should he live, he would not now come into any friendly arrangement with the man who had so nearly caused his death. So, then, good-by to the matrimonial combination Hardie had at first relied on to patch his debt to Alfred and his broken fortunes. Then, as to keeping the money and defying

¹ Or exchange of commodities without the aid of money. See Homer, and Welsh villages, *passim*.

Dodd, that would be very difficult and dangerous; mercantile bills are traceable things, and criminal prosecutions awkward ones. He found himself in a situation he could not see his way through by any mental effort; there were so many objections to every course, and so many to its opposite. "He walked among fires," as the Latins say. But the more he pondered on the course to be taken should Dodd live, the plainer did this dilemma stare him in the face; either he must refund, or fly the country with another man's money, and leave behind him the name of a thief. Parental love, and the remains of self-respect, writhed at this thought; and with these combined a sentiment less genuine, but by no means feeble, the love of reputation. So it was with a reluctant and sick heart he went to the shipping-office, and peered at the posters to see when the next ship sailed for the United States. Still he did go.

Intent on his own schemes, and expecting every day to be struck in front, he did not observe that a man in a rusty velveteen coat followed him, and observed this act, and, indeed, all his visible acts.

Another perplexity was when he should break. There were objections to doing it immediately, and objections to putting it off.

With all this the man was in a ferment: by day he sat waiting and fearing, by night he lay sleepless and thinking; and, though his stoical countenance retained its composure, the furrows deepened in it, and the iron nerves began to twitch at times from strain of mind and want of sleep, and that rack, suspense. Not a night that he did not awaken a dozen times from his brief dozes with a start, and a dread of exposure by some mysterious, unforeseen means.

It is remarkable how truths sometimes flash on men at night in hours of nervous excitement; it was in one

of these nightly reveries David Dodd's pocket-book flashed back upon Mr. Hardie. He saw it before his eyes quite plain, and on the inside of the leather cover a slip of paper pasted, and written on in pencil or pale ink, he could not recall which.

What was that writing? It might be the numbers of the notes, the description of the bills. Why had he not taken it out of the dying man's pocket? "Fool! fool!" he groaned; "to do anything by halves."

Another night he got a far severer shock. Lying in his bed dozing and muttering as usual, he was suddenly startled out of that uneasy slumber by three tremendous knocks at the street-door.

He sprang out of bed, and in his confusion made sure the officers of justice were come for him. He began to huddle on his clothes with a vague notion of flight.

He had got on his trousers and slippers, and was looking under his pillow for the fatal cash, when he heard himself called loudly and repeatedly by name; but this time the sound came from the garden into which his bedroom looked. He opened it very softly, in trepidation and wonder, which were speedily doubled by what met his eyes; for there, right in front of his window, stood an unearthly figure, corresponding in every particular to that notion of a ghost in which we are reared, and which, when our nerves are healthy, we can ridicule as it deserves; but somehow it is never cleaned out of our imagination so thoroughly as it is out of our judgment.

The figure was white as a sheet, and seemed supernaturally tall, and it cried out in a voice like a wounded lion's, "You villain! you Hardie! give me back my money, my fourteen thousand pounds. Give me my children's money, or may your children die before your eyes; give me my darlings' money, or may the eternal curse of God light on you and yours, you scoundrel!"

And the figure kneeled on the grass, and repeated the terrible imprecation almost in the same words, that Hardie shrank back, and, resolute as he was, cowered with superstitious awe.

But this sentiment soon gave way to vulgar fears; the man would alarm the town. And, in fact, Mr. Hardie, in the midst of his agitation, was dimly conscious of hearing a window open softly not very far from him. But it was a dark night. He put his head out in great agitation, and whispered, "Hush! hush! and I'll bring it you down directly."

Internally cursing his hard fate, he got the fatal cash, put on his coat, hunted for the key of the bank parlor, and, having found it, went softly down the stairs, unlocked the door, and went to open the shutters.

At this moment his ear caught a murmur, a low buzzing of voices in the garden.

He naturally thought that Captain Dodd was exposing him to some of the townspeople; he was puzzled what to do, and, like a cautious man as he was, remained passive, but on the watch.

Presently the voices were quiet, and he heard footsteps come very slowly towards the window at which he stood, and then make for the little gate. On this he slipped into the kitchen, which faced the street, and got to a window there, and listened. His only idea was to catch their intentions, if possible, and meet them accordingly. He dared not open the window, for above him on the pavement he saw a female figure half standing, half crouching; but soon that figure rushed wildly out of his sight to meet the footsteps, and then he ventured to open the window, and, listening, heard cries of despair, and a young heart-broken voice say her father was dead.

"Ah! that is all right," muttered Hardie.

Still even this profound egotist was not yet so hard-

ened, but that he felt one chill of horror at himself for the thought, a passing chill.

He listened and listened, and by and by he heard the slow feet recommence their journey, amidst sobs and sighs; and those sorrowful feet, and the sobs and sighs of his causing, got fainter and fainter, retreated, and left him in quiet possession of the fourteen thousand pounds he had brought down to give it up; two minutes ago it was not worth as many pence to him.

He drew a long breath of relief. "It is mine; I am to keep it. It is the will of Heaven."

Poor Heaven!

He went to his bed again, and by a resolute effort composed himself, and determined to sleep. And, in fact, he was just dropping off, when suddenly he started wide awake again; for it recurred to him vividly that a window in his house had opened, while David was cursing him, and demanding his children's money.

Whose window?

Half a dozen people and more slept on that side of the house.

Whose window could it be?

He walked among fires.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NOT many days after this a crowd of persons stood in front of the old bank, looking, half stupefied, at the shutters, and at a piece of paper pasted on them announcing a suspension, only for a month or so, and laying the blame on certain correspondents not specified.

So great was the confidence inspired by the old bank, that many said it would come round, it must come round, in a month; but other of Mr. Hardie's unfortunate clients recognized in the above a mere formula to let them down by degrees; they had seen many statements as hopeful end in a dividend of sixpence in the pound.

Before the day closed, the scene at the bank-door was heart-rending; respectable persons, reduced to pauperism in that one day, kept arriving and telling their fellow-sufferers their little all was with Hardie, and nothing before them but the workhouse or the almshouse; ruined mothers came and held up their ruined children for the banker to see; and the doors were hammered at, and the house as well as the bank was beleaguered by a weeping, wailing, despairing crowd.

But, like an idle wave beating on a rock, all this human misery dashed itself in vain against the banker's brick walls and shutters, hard to them as his very heart.

The next day they mobbed Alfred and hissed him at the back door. Jane was too ashamed and too frightened to stir out. Mr. Hardie sat calmly putting the finishing strokes to his fabricated balance-sheet.

Some innocent and excited victims went to the mayor for redress ; to the aldermen, the magistrates, — in vain.

Towards afternoon the banker's cool contempt for his benefactors, whose lives he had darkened, received a temporary check : a heavy stone was flung at the bank shutters. This ferocious blow made him start, and the place rattle ; it was the signal for a shower : and presently tink, tink, went the windows of the house, and in came the stones, starring the mirrors, upsetting the chairs, denting the papered walls, chipping the mantel-pieces, shivering the bell-glasses and statuettes, and strewing the room with dirty pebbles, and painted fragments, and glittering ruin.

Hardie winced : this was the sort of appeal to touch him. But soon he recovered his *sang-froid*. "Thank you," said he, "I'm much obliged to you ; now I'm in the right and you are in the wrong." And he put himself under protection of the police, and fee'd them so royally that they were zealous on his behalf, and rough and dictatorial even with those who thronged the place only to moan and lament and hold up their ruined children. "You *must* move on, you misery," said the police. And they were right ; misery gains nothing by stopping the way, — nothing by bemoaning itself.

But if the banker, naturally egotistical, and now entirely wrapped in his own plans and fears and well-earned torments, was deaf to the anguish of his clients, there were others in his house who felt it keenly and deeply. Alfred and Jane were heart-broken ; they sat hand in hand in a little room, drawn closer by misfortune, and heard the groans at their door ; and the tears of pity ran down their own cheeks hot with shame, and Alfred wrote on the fly-leaf of his "Ethics" a vow to pay every shilling his father owed these poor people — before he died. It was like him, and like his happy age,

at which the just and the generous can command, in imagination, the means to do kindred deeds.

Soon he found, to his horror, that he had seen but a small percentage of the distress his father had caused; the greater griefs, as usual, stayed at home. Behind the gadding woes lay a terrible number of silent, decent, ruined homes, and broken hearts, and mixed sorrows so unmerited, so complicated, so piteous, and so cruel, that he was ready to tear his hair, to know them and not be able to relieve them instantly.

Of that mere sample I give a mere sample: divine the bulk then, and revolve a page of human history often turned by the people, but too little studied by statisticians and legislators.

Mr. Esgar, a respectable merchant, had heavy engagements, to meet which his money lay at the old bank. Living at a distance he did not hear the news till near dinner-time, and he had promised to take his daughters to a ball that night. He did so, left them there, went home, packed up their clothes, and valuables, and next day levanted with them to America, taking all the money he could scrape together in London; and so he passed his ruin on to others. Esgar was one of those who wear their honesty long, but loose: it was his first disloyal act in business; "Dishonesty made me dishonest," was his excuse. *Valeat quantum.*

John Shaw, a steady footman, had saved and saved, from twenty-one years old to thirty-eight, for "Footman's Paradise," a public-house. He was now engaged to a comely barmaid, who sympathized with him therein; and he had just concluded a bargain for the "Rose and Crown" in the suburbs. Unluckily for him, the money had not been paid over. The blow fell; he lost his all: not his money only, but his wasted life. He could not be twenty-one again, so he hanged himself within forty-

eight hours, and was buried by the parish, grumbling a little, pitying none.

James and Peter Gilpin, William Scott, and Joel Paton, were poor fishermen, and Anglo-Saxon heroes: that's heroes with an eye to the main chance. They risked their lives at sea to save a ship and get salvage; failing there, they risked their lives all the same, like fine fellows as they were, to save the crew. They succeeded, but ruined their old boat. A subscription was raised, and prospered so, that a boat-builder built them a new one on tick, price eighty-five pounds, and the publicans said, "Drink, boys, drink; the subscription will cover all: it is up to a hundred and twenty already." The subscription money was swallowed with the rest, and the Anglo-Saxon heroes hauled to prison.

Dr. Phillips, aged seventy-four, warned by growing infirmities, had sold a tidy practice, with house, furniture, and good-will, for a fair price, and put it in the bank, awaiting some investment. The money was gone now, and the poor old doctor, with a wife and daughter and a crutch, was at once a pauper and an exile; for he had sold under the usual condition, not to practise within so many miles of his successor. He went to that successor, and begged permission to be his assistant at a small, small salary. "I want a younger man," was the reply. Then he went round to his old patients, and begged a few half-guineas to get him a horse and chaise and keep him over the first month in his new place. They pitied him, but most of them were sufferers too by Hardie, and all they gave him did but buy a donkey and cart; and with that he and his went slowly and sadly to a village ten miles distant from the place where all his life had been spent in comfort and good credit. The poor old gentleman often looked back from his cart at the church spires of Barkington.

From seventeen till now almost fourscore
There lived he, but now lived there no more.
At seventeen many their fortunes seek ;
But at fourscore it is too old a week.

Arrived at his village, he had to sell his donkey and trust to his crutch. And so infirmity crept about, begging leave to cure disease, with what success may be inferred from this: Miss Phillips, a ladylike girl of eighteen, was taken up by Farmer Giles before Squire Langton, for stealing turnips out of a field; the farmer was hard, and his losses in Hardie's bank had made him bitter hard, so the poor girl's excuse, that she could not let her father starve, had no effect on him: to jail she should go.¹

Took to the national vice, and went to the national dogs, Thomas Fisher, a saving tinman, and a bachelor; so I expect no pity for him.

To the same goal, by the same road, dragging their families, went the Rev. Henry Scudamore, a curate; Philip Hall, a linendraper; Neil Pratt, a shoemaker; Simon Harris, a greengrocer; and a few more; but the above were all prudent, laborious men, who took a friendly glass, but seldom exceeded, until Hardie's bankruptcy drove them to the devil of drink for comfort.

Turned professional thief, Joseph Locke, working locksmith, who had just saved money enough to buy a shop and good-will, and now lost it every penny.

Turned atheist, and burned the family Bible before his weeping wife and terrified children and gaping servant girl, Mr. Williams, a Sunday-school teacher, known

¹ I find, however, that Squire Langton resolutely refused to commit Miss Phillips. The real reason, I suspect, was, that he had a respect for the gospel, and not much for the law, except those invaluable clauses which restrain poaching. The reason he *gave* was, "Turnips be hanged! If she hadn't eaten them, the fly would." However, he found means to muzzle Giles, and sent the old doctor two couple of rabbits.

hitherto only as a mild, respectable man, a teetotaller, and a good parent and husband. He did not take to drinking, but he did to cursing, and forbade his own flesh and blood ever to enter a church again. This man became an outcast, shunned by all.

Three elderly sisters, the Misses Lunley, well born and bred, lived together on their funds, which, small singly, united made a decent competence. Two of them had refused marriage in early life for fear the third should fall into less tender hands than theirs. For Miss Blanche Lunley was a cripple; disorder of the spine had robbed her, in youth's very bloom, of the power not only to dance as you girls do, but to walk or even stand upright, leaving her two active little hands, and a heart as nearly angelic as we are likely to see here on earth.

She lay all day long on a little iron bedstead at the window of their back parlor that looked on a sunny little lawn, working eagerly for the poor; teaching the poor, young and old, to read, chiefly those of her own sex; hearing the sorrows of the poor, composing the quarrels of the poor, relieving their genuine necessities with a little money, and much ingenuity and labor.

Some poor woman, in a moment of inspiration, called Miss Blanche "the sunshine of the poor." The word was instantly caught up in the parish, and had now this many years gently displaced "Lunley," and settled on her here below, and its echo gone before her up to heaven.

The poor "sunshine of the poor" was happy; life was sweet to her. To know whether this is so, it is useless to inquire of the backbone, or the limbs; look at the face! She lay at her window in the kindred sunshine, and in a world of sturdy, able, agile cursers, grumblers, and yawners, her face, pale as ashes, wore the eternal sunshine of a happy, holy smile.

But there came one to her bedside, and told her the bank was broken, and all the money gone she and her sisters had lent Mr. Hardie.

The saint clasped her hands, and said, "Oh, my poor people! What will become of them?" And the tears ran down her pale and now sorrowful cheeks.

At this time she did not know the full extent of their losses.

But they had given Mr. Hardie a power of attorney to draw out all their consols. That remorseless man had abused the discretion this gave him, and beggared them—they were his personal friends too—to swell his secret hoard.

When "the sunshine of the poor" heard this, and knew that she was now the poorest of the poor, she clasped her hands and cried, "Oh, my poor sisters! my poor sisters!" and she could work no more for sighing.

The next morning found "the sunshine of the poor" extinct in her little bed; ay, dead of grief with no grain of egotism in it: gone straight to heaven without one angry word against Richard Hardie or any other.

Old Betty had a horror of the workhouse. To save her old age from it she had deposited her wages in the bank for the last twenty years, and also a little legacy from Mr. Hardie's father. She now went about the house of her master and debtor, declaring she was sure he would not rob *her*, and, if he did, she would never go into the poorhouse. "I'll go out on the common, and die there. Nobody will miss *me*."

The next instance led to consequences upon consequences: and that is my excuse for telling it the reader somewhat more fully than Alfred heard it.

Mrs. Maxley, one night, found something rough at her feet in bed. "What on earth is this?" said she.

"Never you mind," said Maxley; "say it's my breeches, what then?"

"Why, what on earth does the man put his breeches to bed for?"

"That is my business," roared Maxley; and whispered dryly, "'tain't for you to wear 'em, howsoever."

This little spar led to his telling her he had drawn out all their money; but, when she asked the reason, he snubbed her again indirectly; recommended her sleep.

The fact is, the small-clothes were full of bank-notes, and Maxley always followed them into bed now for fear of robbers.

The bank broke on a Tuesday; Maxley dug on impassive; and when curious people came about him to ask whether he was a loser, he used to inquire very gravely, and dwelling on every syllable, "Do — you — see — anything — green — in this here eye?"

Friday was club day: the clubsmen met at the "Greyhound" and talked over their losses. Maxley sat smoking complacently; and, when his turn came to groan, he said dryly, "I draad all mine a week afore. (Exclamations.) I had a hinkling. My boy Jack he wrote to me from Canada as how Hardies was rotten out there. Now these here bankers they be like an oak-tree; they do go at the limbs first, and then at the heart."

The club was wroth. "What? you went and made yourself safe, and never gave any of us a chance! Was that neighborly? was that — clubable?"

To a hailstorm of similar reproaches, Maxley made but one reply: "'Twarn't *my* business to take care o' *you*." He added, however, a little sulkily, "I was laad for slander once; scalded dog fears lue-warm water."

"Oh," said one, "I don't believe him. He puts a good face on it, but his nine hundred is gone along with ourn."

"'Tain't gone far, then." With this he put his hand

in his pocket, and after some delay pulled out a nice new crisp note and held it up: "What is that? I ask the company."

"Looks like a ten-pun note, James."

"Well, the bulk 'grees with the sample; I knows where to find eight score and nine to match this here."

The note was handed round: and on inspection each countenance in turn wore a malicious smile; till at last Maxley, surrounded by grinning faces, felt uneasy.

"What be 'e all grinning at like a litter o' Chessy cats? warn't ye ugly enough without showing of your rotten teeth?"

"Haw! haw!"

"Better say 'tain't money at all, but only a wench's curl-paper:" and he got up and snatched it fiercely out of the last inspector's hand. "Ye can't run your rigs on me," said he. "What an if I can't read words, I can figures; and I spelt the ten out on every one of them, afore I'd take it."

A loud and general laugh greeted this boast.

Then Maxley snatched up his hat in great wrath, and some anxiety, and went out followed by a peal.

In five minutes he was at home; and tossed the note into his wife's lap. She was knitting by a farthing dip. "Dame!" said he, controlling all appearance of anxiety, "what d'ye call that?"

She took up the note and held it close to the candle: "Why, Jem, it is a ten-pound note, one of Hardie's — *as was.*"

"Then what were those fools laughing at?" And he told her all that had happened.

Mrs. Maxley dropped her knitting and stood up trembling: "Why, you told me you had got our money all safe out."

"Well, and so I have, ye foolish woman:" and he drew

the whole packet out of his pocket and flung them fiercely on the table. Mrs. Maxley ran her finger and eye over them, and uttered a scream of anger and despair.

"These! these be all Hardie's notes," she cried; "and what vally be Hardie's notes when Hardie's be broke?"

Maxley staggered as if he had been shot.

The woman's eyes flashed fury at him: "This is your work, ye born idiot: 'Mind your own business,' says you: you *must* despise your wedded wife, that has more brains in her finger than you have in all your great, long, useless carcass: you *must* have your secrets: one day poison, another day beggary: you have ruined me, you have murdered me: get out of my sight! for if I find a knife I'll put it in you, I will." And in her ungovernable passion, she actually ran to the dresser for a knife: at which Maxley caught up a chair and lifted it furiously above his head to fling at her.

Luckily the man had more self-command than the woman; he dashed the chair furiously on the floor, and ran out of the house.

He wandered about half stupid: and presently his feet took him mechanically round to his garden. He potted about among his plants, looking at them, inspecting them closely, and scarce seeing them. However, he covered up one or two, and muttered, "I think there will be a frost to-night: I think there will be a frost." Then his legs seemed to give way. He sat down and thought of his wedding-day: he began to talk to himself out loud, as some people do in trouble: "Bless her comely face," said he, "and to think I had my arm lifted to strike her, after wearing her so long, and finding her good stuff upon the whole. Well, thank my stars I didn't. We must make the best on't: money's gone; but here's the garden and our hands still: and 'tain't as if we were single to gnaw our hearts alone: wedded life cuts grief a two.

Let's make it up: and begin again. Sixty, come Martinmas: and Susan forty-eight: and I be a'most weary of turning moulds."

He went round to his front door.

There was a crowd round it; a buzzing crowd, with all their faces turned towards his door.

He came at their backs, and asked peevishly what was to do now. Some of the women shrieked at his voice. The crowd turned about, and a score of faces peered at him: some filled with curiosity, some with pity.

"Lord help us!" said the poor man, "is there any more trouble a-foot to-day? Stand aside, please; and let me know."

"No! no!" cried a woman, "don't let him."

"Not let me go into my own house, young woman?" said Maxley, with dignity: "be these your manners?"

"O James! I meant you no ill. Poor man!"

"Poor soul!" said another.

"Stand aloof!" said a strange man. "Who has as good a right to be there as he have?"

A lane was made directly, and Maxley rushed down between two rows of peering faces, with his knees knocking together, and burst into his own house. A scream from the women inside, as he entered, and a deep groan from the strong man bereaved of his mate, told the tragedy. Poor Susan Maxley was gone.

She had died of breast-pang, within a minute of his leaving her; and the last words of two faithful spouses were words of anger.

All these things, and many more less tragic, but very deplorable, came to Alfred Hardie's knowledge, and galled and afflicted him deeply. And several of these revelations heaped discredit high upon Richard Hardie, till the young man, born with a keen sense of justice, and bred amongst honorable minds, began to shudder at his own father.

Herein he was alone; Jane, with the affectionate blindness of her sex, could throw her arms round her father's neck, and pity him for his losses — by his own dishonesty — and pity him most when some victim of his unprincipled conduct died, or despaired. "Poor papa will feel this so deeply," was her only comment on such occasions.

Alfred was not sorry she could take this view; and left her unmolested to confound black with white, and wrong with right, at affection's dictates, but his own trained understanding was not to be duped in matters of plain morality. And so, unable to cure the wrongs he deplored, unable to put his conscience into his pocket, like Richard Hardie, or into his heart like Jane, he wandered alone, or sat brooding and dejected: and the attentive reader, if I am so fortunate as to possess one, will not be surprised to learn that he was troubled too with dark mysterious surmises he half dreaded, yet felt it his duty, to fathom. These and Mrs. Dodd's loss by the bank combined to keep him out of Albion Villa. He often called to ask after Captain Dodd, but was ashamed to enter the house.

Now Richard Hardie's anxiety to know whether David was to die or live had not declined, but rather increased. If the latter, he was now resolved to fly to the United States with his booty, and cheat his alienated son along with the rest: he had come by degrees down to this. It was on Alfred he had counted to keep him informed of David's state: but, on his putting a smooth inquiry, the young man's face flushed with shame, or anger, or something, and he gave a very short, sharp, and obscure reply. In reality he did not know much, nor did Sarah, his informant; for of late the servants had never been allowed to enter David's room.

Mr. Hardie, after this rebuff, never asked Alfred again

but having heard Sampson's name mentioned as Dodd's medical attendant, wrote and asked him to come and dine, next time he should visit Barkington:—

You will find me a fallen man (said he) ; to-morrow we resign our house and premises and furniture to the assignees, and go to live at a little furnished cottage not very far from your friends the Dodds. It is called "Musgrove Cottage." There, where we have so little to offer besides a welcome, none but true friends will come near us: indeed, there are very few I should venture to ask for such a proof of fidelity to your broken friend.

R. H.

The good-hearted Sampson sent a cordial reply, and came to dinner at Musgrove Cottage.

Now all Hardie wanted of him in reality was to know about David; so when Jane had retired, and the decanter circulated, he began to pump him by his vanity. "I understand," said he, "you have wrought one of your surprising cures in this neighborhood. Albion Villa!"

Sampson shook his head sorrowfully: Mr. Hardie's eyes sparkled; Alfred watched him keenly and bitterly.

"How can I work a great cure after those ass-ass-ins Short and Osmond? Look, see! the man had been wounded in the hid, and lost blood: thin stabbed in the shoulder; and lost more blood." Both the Hardies uttered an ejaculation of unfeigned surprise. "So, instid of recruiting the buddy thus exhausted of the great liquid material of all repair, the profissional ass-ass-in came and exhausted him worse: stabbed him while he slept; stabbed him unconscious, stabbed him in a vein: and stole more blood from him. Wasn't that enough? No! the routine of profissional ass-ass-ination had but begun; nixt they stabbed him with cupping-needles, and so stole more of his life-blood. And they were goen from their

stabs to their bites, goen to leech his temples, and so hand him over to the sixton."

"But you came in and saved him," cried Alfred.

"I saved his life," said Sampson, sorrowfully: "but life is not the only good thing a man may be robbed of by those who steal his life-blood, and so impoverish and water the contents of the vessels of the brain."

"Dr. Sampson," said Alfred, "what do you mean by these mysterious words? you alarm me."

"What, don't you know? Haven't they told you?"

"No, I have not had the courage to enter the house since the bank" — He stopped in confusion.

"Ay, I understand," said Sampson: "however, it can't be hidden now —

"He is a maniac."

Sampson made this awful announcement soberly and sorrowfully.

Alfred groaned aloud, and even his father experienced a momentary remorse; but so steady had been the progress of corruption, that he felt almost unmixed joy the next instant; and his keen-witted son surprised the latter sentiment in his face, and shuddered with disgust.

Sampson went on to say that he believed the poor man had gone flourishing a razor; and Mrs. Dodd had said, "Yes, kill me, David: kill the mother of your children," and never moved: which feminine, or in other words irrational, behavior, had somehow disarmed him. But it would not happen again: his sister had come: a sensible, resolute woman. She had signed the order, and Osmond and he the certificates, and he was gone to a private asylum. "Talking of that," said Sampson, rising suddenly, "I must go and give them a word of comfort; for they are just breaking their hearts at parting with him, poor things: I'll be back in an hour."

On his departure, Jane returned and made the tea in the dining-room: they lived like that now.

Mr. Hardie took it from his favorite's little white hand, and smiled on her: he should not have to go to a foreign land after all: who would believe a madman if he should rave about his thousands? He sipped his tea luxuriously, and presently delivered himself thus, with bland self-satisfaction: —

“My dear Alfred, some time ago you wished to marry a young lady without fortune; you thought that I had a large one: and you expected me to supply all deficiencies. You did not overrate my parental feeling; but you did my means: I would have done this for you, and with pleasure, but for my own coming misfortunes. As it was, I said, ‘No.’ And, when you demanded, somewhat peremptorily, my reasons, I said, ‘Trust me.’ Well, you see I was right: such a marriage would have been your utter ruin. However, I conclude after what Dr. Sampson has told us, you have resigned it on other grounds. Jane, my dear, Captain Dodd, I am sorry to say, is afflicted. He has gone mad.”

“Gone mad? oh, how shocking! What will become of his poor children?” She thought of Edward first.

“We have just heard it from Sampson. And I presume, Alfred, you are not so far gone as to insist on propagating insanity, by a marriage with his daughter.”

At this conclusion, which struck her obliquely, though aimed at Alfred, Jane sighed gently; and her dream of earthly happiness seemed to melt away.

But Alfred ground his teeth, and replied with great bitterness and emotion, “I think, sir, you are the last man who ought to congratulate yourself on the affliction that has fallen on that unhappy family I aspire to enter, all the more that now they have calamities for me to share” —

"More fool you," put in Mr. Hardie, calmly.

"—For I much fear you are one of the causes of that calamity."

Mr. Hardie assumed a puzzled air. "I don't see how that can be, do you, Jenny? Sampson told us the causes: a wound on the head, a wound in the arm, bleeding, cupping, etc."

"There may be other causes Dr. Sampson has not been told of—yet."

"Possibly. I really don't know what you allude to."

The son fixed his eyes on the father, and leaned across the table to him till their faces nearly met.

"The fourteen thousand pounds, sir."

CHAPTER XXIV.

MR. HARDIE was taken by surprise for once, and had not a word to say, but looked in his son's face, mute and gasping as a fish.

During this painful silence his children eyed him inquiringly, but not with the same result; for one face is often read differently by two persons: to Jane, whose intelligence had no aids, he seemed unaffectedly puzzled; but Alfred discerned beneath his wonder the terror of detection rising, and then thrust back by the strong will; that stoical face shut again like an iron door, but not quickly enough; the right words, the "open sesame," had been spoken, and one unguarded look had confirmed Alfred's vague suspicions of foul play. He turned his own face away; he was alienated by the occurrences of the last few months, but nature and tender reminiscences still held him by some fibres of the heart. In a moment of natural indignation he had applied the touchstone, but its success grieved him; he could not bear to go on exposing his father, so he left the room with a deep sigh, in which pity mingled with shame and regret. He wandered out into the silent night, and soon was leaning on the gate of Albion Villa, gazing wistfully at the windows, and sore perplexed and nobly wretched.

As he was going out, Mr. Hardie raised his eyebrows with a look of disinterested wonder and curiosity, and touched his forehead to Jane, as much as to say, "Is he disordered in his mind?"

As soon as they were alone, he asked her coolly what Alfred meant. She said she had no idea. Then he

examined her keenly about this fourteen thousand pounds; and found, to his relief, Alfred had never even mentioned it to her.

And now Richard Hardie, like his son, wanted to be alone, and think over this new peril that had risen in the bosom of his own family; and, for once, the company of his favorite child was irksome. He made an excuse and strolled out in his turn into the silent night. It was calm and clear; the thousand holy eyes under which men prefer to do their crimes — except when they are in too great a hurry to wait — looked down and seemed to wonder anything can be so silly as to sin; and beneath their pure gaze the man of the world pondered with all his soul. He tormented himself with conjectures: through what channel did Alfred suspect him? through the Dodds? were they aware of their loss? had the pocket-book spoken? If so, why had not Mrs. Dodd or her son attacked him? But then, perhaps Alfred was their agent: they wished to try a friendly remonstrance through a mutual friend before proceeding to extremities; this accorded with Mrs. Dodd's character as he remembered her.

The solution was reasonable, but he was relieved of it by recollecting what Alfred had said: that he had not entered the house since the bank broke.

On this he began to hope Alfred's might be a mere suspicion he could not establish by any proof, and, at all events, he would lock it in his own breast like a good son; his never having given a hint even to his sister favored this supposition.

Thus meditating, Mr. Hardie found himself at the gate of Albion Villa.

Yet he had strolled out with no particular intention of going there. Had his mind, apprehensive of danger from that quarter, driven his body thither?

He took a look at the house, and the first thing he saw was a young lady leaning over the balcony and murmuring softly to a male figure below, whose outline Mr. Hardie could hardly discern, for it stood in the shadow. Mr. Hardie was delighted: "Aha, Miss Juliet," said he, "if Alfred does not visit you, some one else does. You have soon supplied your peevish lover's place." He then withdrew softly from the gate, not to disturb the intrigue, and watched a few yards off, determined to see who Julia's nightly visitor was, and give Alfred surprise for surprise.

He had not long to wait; the man came away directly, and walked, head erect, past Mr. Hardie, and glanced full in his face, but did not vouchsafe him a word. It was Alfred himself. Mr. Hardie was profoundly alarmed and indignant. "The young traitor! Never enter the house? no; but he comes and tells her everything directly, under her window, on the sly: and, when he is caught — defies me to my face." And now he suspected female cunning and malice in the way that thunderbolt had been quietly prepared for him and launched, without warning, in his very daughter's presence, and the result just communicated to Julia Dodd.

In a very gloomy mood he followed his son, and heard his firm though elastic tread on the frosty ground, and saw how loftily he carried his head, and from that moment feared and very, very nearly hated him.

The next day he feigned sick, and sent for Osmond. That worthy prescribed a pill and a draught: the former laxative, the latter astringent. This ceremony performed, Mr. Hardie gossiped with him; and, after a *détour* or two, glided to his real anxiety. "Sampson tells me you know more about Captain Dodd's case than he does; he is not very clear as to the cause of the poor man's going mad."

"The cause? Why, apoplexy."

"Yes; but I mean, what caused the apoplexy?"

Mr. Osmond replied that apoplexy was often idiopathic.¹ Captain Dodd, as he understood, had fallen down in the street in a sudden fit; "But as for the mania, that is to be attributed to an insufficient evacuation of blood while under the apoplectic coma."

"Not bled enough! Why, Sampson says it is because he was bled too much."

Osmond was amused at this, and repeated that the mania came of not being bled enough.

The discussion was turned into an unexpected quarter by the entrance of Jane Hardie, who came timidly in and said, "O Mr. Osmond, I cannot let you go without telling you how anxious I am about Alfred. He is so thin and pale and depressed."

"Nonsense, Jane!" said Mr. Hardie; "have we not all cause to be dejected in this house?" But she persisted gently that there was more in it than that; and his headaches were worse; and she could not be easy any longer without advice.

"Ah! those headaches," said Mr. Osmond, "they always made me uneasy. To tell the truth, Miss Hardie, I have noticed a remarkable change in him; but I did not like to excite apprehensions. And so he mopes, does he? seeks solitude, and is taciturn and dejected?"

"Yes. But I do not mind that so much as his turning so pale and thin."

"Oh, it is all part of one malady."

"Then you know what is the matter?"

"I think I do; and yours is a wise and timely anxiety. Your brother's is a very delicate case of a hyperæsthetic

¹ "Arising of itself." A term rather hastily applied to disorders the coming signs of which have not been detected by the medical attendant.

The birth of Topsy was idiopathic—in that learned lady's opinion.

character, and I should like to have the advice of a profound physician. Let me see, Dr. Wycherley will be with me to-morrow; may I bring him over as a friend?"

This proposal did not at all suit Mr. Hardie; he put his own construction on Alfred's pallor and dejection, and was uneasy at the idea of his being cross-questioned by a couple of doctors.

"No, no," said he; "Taff has fancies enough already; I cannot have you gentlemen coming here to fill his head with many more."

"Oh, he has fancies, has he?" said Osmond, keenly. "My dear sir, we shall not say one word to *him*; that might irritate him; but I should like *you* to hear a truly learned opinion."

Jane looked so imploringly, that Mr. Hardie yielded a reluctant assent, on those terms.

So the next day, by appointment, Mr. Osmond introduced his friend Dr. Wycherley: bland and bald, with a fine head, and a face naturally intelligent, but crossed every now and then by gleams of vacancy; a man of large reading, and of tact to make it subserve his interests. A voluminous writer on certain medical subjects, he had so saturated himself with circumlocution, that it distilled from his very tongue; he talked like an article; a quarterly one; and so gained two advantages: 1st, He rarely irritated a fellow-creature; for, if he began a sentence hot, what with its length, and what with its windiness, he ended it cool: item, stabs by polysyllables are pricks by sponges. 2dly, This foible earned him the admiration of fools; and that is as invaluable as they are innumerable.

Yet was there, in the mother-tongue he despised, one gem of a word he vastly admired, like most quarterly writers. That charming word, the pet of the polysyllabic, was "OF."

He opened the matter in a subdued and sympathizing tone well calculated to win a loving father such as Richard Hardie — was not.

“My good friend here informs me, sir, you are so fortunate as to possess a son of distinguished abilities, and who is at present laboring under some of those precursory indications of incipient disease of the cerebro-psychical organs, of which I have been, I may say, somewhat successful in diagnosing the symptoms. Unless I have been misinformed, he has, for a considerable time, experienced persistent headache of a cephalalgic or true cerebral type, and has now advanced to the succeeding stage of taciturnity and depression, not¹ unaccompanied with isolation, and probably constipation; but as yet without hallucination, though possibly, and, as my experience of the great majority of these cases would induce me to say, probably, he is not² undisturbed by one or more of those latent, and, at first, trifling aberrations, either of the intelligence or the senses, which, in their preliminary stages, escape the observation of all but the expert nosologist.”

“There, you see,” said Osmond, “Dr. Wycherley agrees with me; yet, I assure you, I have only detailed the symptoms, and not the conclusion I had formed from them.”

Jane inquired timidly what that conclusion was.

“Miss Hardie, we think it one of those obscure tendencies which are very curable if taken in time” — Dr. Wycherley ended the sentence — “But no longer remediable if the fleeting opportunity is allowed to escape, and diseased action to pass into diseased organization.”

Jane looked awe-struck at their solemnity, but Mr. Hardie, who was taking advice against the grain, turned satirical. “Gentlemen,” said he, “be pleased to begin

¹ *Anglicè*, “accompanied.”

² *Anglicè*, “disturbed.”

by moderating your own obscurity ; and then, perhaps I shall see better how to cure my son's disorder : what the deuce are you driving at ? ”

The two doctors looked at one another inquiringly, and so settled how to proceed. Dr. Wycherley explained to Mr. Hardie that there was a sort of general unreasonable and superstitious feeling abroad, a kind of terror of the complaint with which his son was threatened ; “ *and which*, instead of the most remediable of disorders, is looked at as the most incurable of maladies ; ” it was on this account he had learned to approach the subject with singular caution, and even with a timidity which was kinder in appearance than in reality ; that he must admit.

“ Well, you may speak out, as far as I am concerned,” said Mr. Hardie, with consummate indifference.

“ Oh, yes ! ” said Jane, in a fever of anxiety ; “ pray conceal nothing from us. ”

“ Well, then, sir, I have not as yet had the advantage of examining your son personally, but from the diagnostics I have no doubt whatever he is laboring under the first foreshadowings of cerebro-psychical perturbation. To speak plainly, the symptoms are characteristic of the initiatory stage of the germination of a morbid state of the phenomena of intelligence. ”

His unprofessional hearers only stared.

“ In one word, then, ” said Dr. Wycherley, waxing impatient at their abominable obtuseness, “ it is the premonitory stage of the precursory condition of an organic affection of the brain. ”

“ Oh ! ” said Mr. Hardie, “ the brain ! ¹ I see ; the boy is going mad. ”

The doctors stared in their turn at the prodigious coolness of a tender parent. “ Not exactly, ” said Dr.

¹ What a blessing there are a few English words left in all our dialects.

Wycherley; "I am habitually averse to exaggeration of symptoms. Your son's suggest to me 'the incubation of insanity,' nothing more."

Jane uttered an exclamation of horror: the doctor soothed her with an assurance that there was no cause for alarm. "Incipient aberration" was of easy cure: the mischief lay in delay. "Miss Hardie," said he paternally, "during a long and busy professional career, it has been my painful province to witness the deplorable consequences of the non-recognition, by friends and relatives, of the precedent symptoms of those organic affections of the brain, the relief of which was within the reach of well-known therapeutic agents, if exhibited seasonably."

He went on to deplore the blind prejudice of unprofessional persons; who chose to fancy that other diseases creep, but insanity pounces on a man: which he expressed thus neatly: "That other deviations from organic conditions of health are the subject of clearly defined though delicate gradations, but that the worst and most climacteric forms of cerebro-psychical disorder are suddenly developed affections presenting no evidence of any antecedent cephalic organic change, and unaccompanied by a premonitory stage, or by incipient symptoms."

This chimera he proceeded to confute, by experience: he had repeatedly been called in to cases of mania described as sudden, and almost invariably found the patient had been cranky for years; which he condensed thus: "His conduct and behavior for many years previously to any symptom of mental aberration being noticed, had been characterized by actions quite irreconcilable with the supposition of the existence of perfect sanity of intellect."

He instanced a parson, whom he had lately attended,

and found him as constipated, and as convinced he was John the Baptist engaged to the Princess Mary, as could be. "But," continued the learned doctor, "upon investigation of this afflicted ecclesiastic's antecedent history, I discovered that, for years before this, he had exhibited conduct incompatible with the hypothesis of a mind whose equilibrium had been undisturbed: he had caused a number of valuable trees to be cut down on his estate, without being able to offer a sane justification for such an outrageous proceeding: and had actually disposed of a quantity of his patrimonial acres, '*and which*' clearly he never would have parted with had he been in anything resembling a condition of sanity."

"Did he sell the land and timber below the market price?" inquired Mr. Hardie, perking up, and exhibiting his first symptom of interest in the discussion.

"On that head, sir, my informant, his heir-at-law, gave me no information: nor did I enter into that class of detail; you naturally look at morbid phenomena in a commercial spirit, but we regard them medically; and, all this time, most assiduously visiting the sick of his parish and preaching admirable sermons."

The next instance he gave was of a stockbroker suffering under general paralysis and a rooted idea that all the specie in the Bank of England was his, and ministers in league with foreign governments to keep him out of it. "Him," said the doctor, "I discovered to have been for years guilty of conduct entirely incompatible with the hypothesis of undisordered mental functions. He had accused his domestics of peculation, and had initiated legal proceedings with a view of prosecuting in a court of law one of his oldest friends."

"Whence you infer that, if my son has not for years been doing cranky acts, he is not likely to be deranged at present."

This adroit twist of the argument rather surprised Dr. Wycherley. However, he was at no loss for a reply. "It is not insanity, but the incubation of insanity, which is suspected in your intelligent son's case: and the best course will be for me to enumerate in general terms the several symptoms of 'the incubation of insanity:'" he concluded with some severity, "after that, sir, I shall cease to intrude what I fear is an unwelcome conviction."

The parent, whose levity and cold reception of good tidings he had thus mildly, yet with due dignity, rebuked, was a man of the world; and liked to make friends, not enemies: so he took the hint, and made a very civil speech, assuring Dr. Wycherley that, if he ventured to differ from him, he was none the less obliged by the kind interest he took in a comparative stranger: and would be very glad to hear all about the "incubation of insanity."

Dr. Wycherley bowed slightly; and complied: —

"One diagnostic preliminary sign of abnormal cerebral action is cephalalgia, or true cerebral headache; I mean persistent headache not accompanied by a furred tongue, or other indicia significant of abdominal or renal disorder as its origin."

Jane sighed. "He had sad headaches."

"The succeeding symptom is a morbid affection of sleep. Either the patient suffers from insomnia; or else from hypersomnia, which we sub-divide into sopor, carus, and lethargus; or thirdly from kakosomnia, or a propensity to mere dozing, and to all the morbid phenomena of dreams."

"Papa," said Jane, "poor Alfred sleeps very badly: I hear him walking at all hours of the night."

"I thought as much," said Dr. Wycherley; "insomnia is the commonest feature. To resume; the insidious

advance of morbid thought is next marked by high spirits, or else by low spirits; generally the latter. The patient begins by moping, then shows great lassitude and *ennui*, then becomes abstracted, moody, and occupied with a solitary idea."

Jane clasped her hands, and the tears stood in her eyes; so well did this description tally with poor Alfred's case.

"And at this period," continued Dr. Wycherley, "my experience leads me to believe that some latent delusion is generally germinating in the mind, though often concealed with consummate craft by the patient: the open development of this delusion is the next stage, and, with this last morbid phenomenon, incubation ceases and insanity begins. Sometimes, however, the illusion is physical rather than psychical, of the sense rather than of the intelligence. It commences at night: the incubator begins by seeing nocturnal visions, often of a photopsic¹ character, or hearing nocturnal sounds, neither of which have any material existence, being conveyed to his optic or auricular nerves not from without, but from within, by the agency of a disordered brain. These the reason, hitherto unimpaired, combats at first, especially when they are nocturnal only: but being reproduced, and becoming diurnal, the judgment succumbs under the morbid impression produced so repeatedly. These are the ordinary antecedent symptoms characteristic of the incubation of insanity; to which are frequently added somatic exaltation, or, in popular language, physical excitability—a disposition to knit the brows—great activity of the mental faculties—or else a well-marked decline of the powers of the understanding—an exaggeration of the normal conditions of thought—or a reversal of the mental habits and sentiments, such as

¹ Luminous.

a sudden aversion to some person hitherto beloved, or some study long relished and pursued."

Jane asked leave to note these all down in her note-book.

Mr. Hardie assented adroitly; for he was thinking whether he could not sift some grain out of all this chaff. Should Alfred blab his suspicions, here were two gentlemen who would at all events help him to throw ridicule on them.

Dr. Wycherley, having politely aided Jane Hardie to note down "the preliminary process of the incubation of disorders of the intellect," resumed: "Now, sir, your son appears to be in a very inchoate stage of the malady: he has cerebral kephalalgia and insomnia" —

"And, oh, doctor," said Jane, "he knits his brows often; and has given up his studies; won't go back to Oxford this term."

"Exactly; and seeks isolation, and is a prey to morbid distraction and reverie: but has no palpable illusions; has he?"

"Not that I know of," said Mr. Hardie.

"Well, but," objected Jane, "did not he say something to you very curious the other night; about Captain Dodd and fourteen thousand pounds?"

Mr. Hardie's blood ran cold: "No," he stammered, "not that I remember."

"Oh, yes, he did, papa: you have forgotten it: but at the time you were quite puzzled what he could mean: and you did *so*." She put her finger to her forehead: and the doctors interchanged a meaning glance.

"I believe you are right, Jenny," said Mr. Hardie, taking the cue so unexpectedly offered him: "he did say some nonsense I could not make head nor tail of; but we all have our crotchets; there, run away, like a good girl, and let me explain all this to our good friends here: and mind, not a word about it to Alfred."

When she was gone, he said, "Gentlemen, my son is over head and ears in love; that is all."

"Ay, erotic monomania is a very ordinary phase of insanity," said Dr. Wycherley.

"His unreasonable passion for a girl he knows he can never marry makes him somewhat crotchety and cranky: that, and over-study, may have unhinged his mind a little: suppose I send him abroad? my good brother will find the means; or we could advance it him, I and the other trustees; he comes into ten thousand pounds in a month or two."

The doctors exchanged a meaning look. They then dissuaded him earnestly from the idea of Continental travel.

"*Cælum non animam mutant qui trans mare currunt,*" said Wycherley, and Osmond explained that Alfred would brood abroad as well as at home, if he went alone: and Dr. Wycherley summed up thus: "The most advisable course is to give him the benefit of the personal superintendence of some skilful physician possessed of means and appliances of every sort for soothing and restraining the specific malady."

Mr. Hardie did not at first see the exact purport of this oleaginous periphrasis. Presently he caught a glimpse: but said he thought confinement was hardly the thing to drive away melancholy.

"Not in all respects," replied Dr. Wycherly: "but, on the other hand, a little gentle restraint is the safest way of effecting a disruption of the fatal associations that have engendered and tend to perpetuate the disorder. Besides, the medicinal appliances are invaluable; including, as they do, the nocturnal and diurnal attendance of a psycho-physical physician, who knows the psycho-somatic relation of body and mind, and can apply physical remedies, of the effect of which on the physical instru-

ment of intelligence, the gray matter of the brain, we have seen so many examples."

The good doctor then feelingly deplored the inhumanity of parents and guardians in declining to subject their incubators to opportune and salutary restraint under the more than parental care of a psycho-somatic physician. On this head he got quite warm, and inveighed against the abominable *cruelty* of the thing. "It is contrary," said he, "to every principle of justice and humanity, that a fellow-creature, deranged perhaps only on one point, should for the want of the early attention of those, whose duty it is to watch over him, linger out his existence separated from all who are dear to him, and condemned without any crime to be a prisoner for life."

Mr. Hardie was puzzled by this sentence, in which the speaker's usual method was reversed, and the thought was bigger than the words.

"Oh," said he at last, "I see. We ought to incarcerate our children to keep them from being incarcerated."

"That is one way of putting it with a vengeance," said Mr. Osmond, staring. "No; what my good friend means" —

"Is this; where the patient is possessor of an income of such a character as to enable his friends to show a sincere affection by anticipating the consequences of neglected morbid phenomena of the brain, there a lamentable want of humanity is exhibited by the persistent refusal to the patient, on the part of his relatives, of the incalculable advantage of the authoritative advice of a competent physician accompanied with the safeguards and preventives of" —

But ere the mellifluous pleonast had done oiling his paradox with fresh polysyllables, to make it slip into the

banker's narrow understanding, he met with a curious interruption. Jane Hardie fluttered in to say a man was at the door accusing himself of being deranged.

"How often this sort of coincidence occurs," said Osmond, philosophically.

"Do not refuse him, dear papa; it is not for money; he only wants you to give him an order to go into a lunatic asylum."

"Now, there is a sensible man," said Dr. Wycherley.

"Well, but," objected Mr. Hardie, "if he is a sensible man, why does he want to go to an asylum?"

"Oh, they are all sensible at times," observed Mr. Osmond.

"*Singularly so*," said Dr. Wycherley, warmly. And he showed a desire to examine this paragon, who had the sense to know he was out of his senses.

"It would be but kind of you, sir," said Jane; "poor, poor man!" She added, he did not like to come in, and would they mind just going out to him?

"Oh, no, not in the least; especially as you seem interested in him."

And they all three rose and went out together, and found the petitioner at the front door. Who should it be but James Maxley!

His beard was unshaven, his face haggard, and everything about him showed a man broken in spirit as well as fortune; even his voice had lost half its vigor, and, whenever he had uttered a consecutive sentence or two, his head dropped on his breast, pitifully; indeed, this sometimes occurred in the middle of a sentence, and then the rest of it died on his lips.

Mr. Richard Hardie was not prepared to encounter one of his unhappy creditors thus publicly, and, to shorten the annoyance, would have dismissed him roughly; but he dared not; for Maxley was no longer alone, nor

unfriended; when Jane left him, to intercede for him, a young man joined him, and was now comforting him with kind words, and trying to get him to smoke a cigar; and this good-hearted young gentleman was the banker's son in the flesh, and his opposite in spirit, Mr. Alfred Hardie.

Finding these two in contact, the doctors interchanged demurest glances.

Mr. Hardie asked Maxley sullenly what he wanted of them.

"Well, sir," said Maxley, despondingly, "I have been to all the other magistrates in the borough; for what with losing my money, and what with losing my missus, I think I bain't quite right in my head; I do see such curious things, enough to make a body's skin creep at times." And down went his head on his chest.

"Well?" said Mr. Hardie, peevishly; "go on; you went to the magistrates, and what then?"

Maxley looked up, and seemed to recover the thread; "Why, they said 'no,' they couldn't send me to the 'sylum, not from home; I must be a pauper first. So then my neighbors they said I had better come to you." And down went his head again.

"Well, but," said Mr. Hardie, "you cannot expect me to go against the other magistrates."

"Why not, sir? You have had a hatful o' money of me; the other gentlemen hain't had a farthing. They owes me no service, but you does; nine hundred pounds' worth if ye come to that."

There was no malice in this; it was a plain broken-hearted man's notion of give and take; but it was a home-thrust all the same; and Mr. Hardie was visibly discountenanced, and Alfred more so.

Mr. Osmond, to relieve a situation so painful, asked Maxley rather hastily what were the curious things he saw.

Maxley shuddered. "The unreasonablest beasts, sir, you ever saw or heard tell on; mostly snakes and dragons. Can't stoop my head to do no work, for them, sir. Bless your heart, if I was to leave you gentlemen now, and go and dig for five minutes in my garden, they would come about me as thick as slugs on cabbage; why, 'twas but yestere'en I tried to hoe a bit, and up come the fearfulest great fiery sarpint; scared me so, I heaved my hoe and laid on un' properly; presently I seemed to come out of a sort of a kind of a red mist into the clear; and there laid my poor missus's favorite hen; I had been and killed her for a sarpint!" He sighed; then, after a moment's pause, lowered his voice to a whisper, "Now suppose I was to go and take some poor Christian for one of these gre-at bloody dragons I do see at odd times, I might do him a mischief, you know, and not mean him no harm neither. Oh, dooee take and have me locked up, gentlemen, dooee now: tellee I ain't fit to be about, my poor head is so mazed."

"Well, well," said Mr. Hardie, "I'll give you an order for the union."

"What, make a pauper of me?"

"I cannot help it," said the magistrate; "it is the routine; and it was settled at a meeting of the bench last month that we must adhere to the rule as strictly as possible; the asylum is so full; and you know, Maxley, it is not as if you were dangerous."

"That I be, sir; I don't know what I'm a-looking at, or a-doing. Would I ha' gone and killed my poor Susan's hen if I hadn't a been beside myself? and she in her grave, poor dear; no, not for untold gold; and I be fond of that too; used to be, however; but now I don't seem to care for money nor nothing else." And his head dropped.

"Look here, Maxley, old fellow," said Alfred, sarcas

tically, "you must go to the workhouse; and stay there till you hoe a pauper; take him for a crocodile, and kill him; then you will get into an asylum, whether the Barkington magistrates like it or not; that is the *routine*, I believe; and as reasonable as most routine."

Dr. Wycherley admired Alfred for this, and whispered Mr. Osmond, "How subtly they reason!"

Mr. Hardie did not deign to answer his son, who indeed had spoken at him, and not to him.

As for poor Maxley, he was in sad and sober earnest, and could not relish nor even take in Alfred's irony; he lifted his head and looked Mr. Hardie in the face.

"You be a hard man," said he, trembling with emotion. "You robbed me and my missus of our all, you ha' broke her heart, and turned my head, and if I was to come and kill *you* 'twould only be clearing scores. 'Stead of that I comes to you like a lamb, and says, give me your name on a bit of paper, and put me out of harm's way. 'No,' says you, 'go to the workhouse!' Be *you* in the workhouse? You that owes me nine hundred pounds and my dead missus?" With this he went into a rage, took a packet out of his pocket, and flung nine hundred pounds of Mr. Hardie's paper at Mr. Hardie's head before any one could stop him.

But Alfred saw his game, stepped forward, and caught it with one hand, and with the dexterity of a wicket-keeper, within a foot of his father's nose. "How's that, umpire?" said he; then, a little sternly, "Don't do that again, Mr. Maxley, or I shall have to give you a hiding — to keep up appearances." He then put the notes in his pocket, and said quietly, "*I* shall give you your money for these, before the year ends."

"You won't be quite so mad as that, I hope," remonstrated his father. But he made no reply; they very seldom answered one another now.

"Oh," said Dr. Wycherley, inspecting him like a human curiosity, "*nullum magnum ingenium sine mixturâ dementiæ.*"

"*Nec parvum sine mixturâ stultitiæ,*" retorted Alfred in a moment; and met his offensive gaze with a point-blank look of supercilious disdain.

Then having shut him up, he turned to Osmond. "Come," said he, "prescribe for this poor fellow, who asks for a hospital, so routine gives him a workhouse; come, you know there is no limit to your skill and good-nature; you cured Spot of the worms, cure poor old Maxley of his snakes; oblige me."

"That I will, Mr. Alfred," said Osmond, heartily; and wrote a prescription on a leaf of his memorandum-book, remarking that, though a simple purgative, it had made short work of a great many serpents and dragons, and not a few spectres and hobgoblins into the bargain.

The young gentleman thanked him graciously, and said kindly to Maxley, "Get that made up — here's a guinea — and I'll send somebody to see how you are to-morrow."

The poor man took the guinea and the prescription, and his head drooped again, and he slouched away.

Dr. Wycherley remarked significantly that his conduct was worth imitating by *all persons similarly situated*; and concluded oracularly, "Prophylaxis is preferable to therapeusis."

"Or, as *Porson* would say, 'Prevention is better than cure.'"

With this parting blow the Oxonian suddenly sauntered away, unconscious, it seemed, of the existence of his companions.

"I never saw a plainer case of incubation," remarked Dr. Wycherley with vast benevolence of manner.

"Maxley's?"

“Oh, no; that is parochial. It is your profoundly interesting son I alluded to. Did you notice his supercilious departure? *And his morbid celerity of repartee?*”

Mr. Hardie replied with some little hesitation, “Yes; and, excuse me, I thought he had rather the best of the battle with you.”

“Indubitably so,” replied Dr. Wycherley; “they always do; at least, such is *my* experience. If ever I break a lance of wit with an incubator, I calculate with confidence on being unhorsed with abnormal rapidity; and rare, indeed, are the instances in which my anticipations are not promptly and fully realized; by a similar rule of progression the incubator is seldom a match for the confirmed maniac, either in the light play of sarcasm, the coruscations of wit, or the severer encounters of dialectical ratiocination.”

“Dear, dear, dear! Then how is one to know a genius from a madman?” inquired Jane.

“*By sending for a psychological physician.*”

“If I understand the doctor right, the two things are not opposed,” remarked Mr. Hardie.

Dr. Wycherley assented, and made a remarkable statement in confirmation: “One half of the aggregate of the genius of the country is at present under restraint; fortunately for the community; and still more fortunately for itself.”

He then put on his gloves, and, with much kindness but solemnity, warned Mr. Hardie not to neglect his son's case, nor to suppose that matters could go on like this without “disintegrating or disorganizing the gray matter of the brain.” “I admit,” said he, “that in some recorded cases of insanity the brain on dissection has revealed no signs of structural or functional derangement, and that, on the other hand, considerable encephalic disorganization has been shown to have existed in

other cases without aberration or impairment of the reason: but such phenomena are to be considered as pathological curiosities, with which the empiric would fain endeavor to disturb the sound general conclusions of science. The only safe mode of reasoning on matters so delicate and profound is *à priori*; and, as it may safely be assumed as a self-evident proposition, that disturbed intelligence bears the same relation to the brain as disordered respiration does to the lungs, it is not logical, reasoning *à priori*, to assume the possibility that the studious or other mental habits of a kephalalgic, and gifted, youth, can be reversed, and erotic monomania germinate, with all the morbid phenomena of isolation, dejection of the spirits, and abnormal exaltation of the powers of wit and ratiocination, without some considerable impairment, derangement, disturbance, or modification, of the psychical, motorial, and sensorial functions of the great cerebral ganglion. But it would be equally absurd to presuppose that these several functions can be disarranged for months, without more or less disorganization of the medullary, or even of the cineritious, matter of the encephalon. *Therefore* — dissection of your talented son would doubtless reveal at this moment either steatomatous or atheromatous deposits in the cerebral blood-vessels, or an encysted abscess, probably of no very recent origin, or, at the least, considerable inspissation, and opacity, of the membranes of the encephalon, or more or less pulpy disorganization of one or other of the hemispheres of the brain; *good-morning!*”

“Good-morning, sir; and a thousand thanks for your friendly interest in my unhappy boy.”

The psycho-cerebrals “took their departure” (psycho-cerebral for “went away”), and left Jane Hardie brimful of anxiety. Alfred was not there to dispose of the

tirade in two words, "*Petitio principii*," and so smoke on: and, not being an university woman, she could not keep her eye on the original assumption while following the series of inferences the learned doctor built so neatly, story by story, on the foundation of the quicksand of a loose conjecture.¹

"Now not a word of this to Alfred," said Mr. Hardie. "I shall propose him a little foreign tour, to amuse his mind."

"Yes, but, papa, if some serious change is really going on inside his poor head?"

Mr. Hardie smiled sarcastically. "Don't you see that if the mind can wound the brain, the mind can cure it?" Then, after awhile, he said parentally, "My child, I must give you a lesson: men of the world use enthusiasts, like those two I have just been drawing out, for their tools; we don't let them make tools of us. Osmond, you know, is jackal to an asylum in London. Dr. Wycherley, I have heard, keeps two or three such establishments by himself or his agents, blinded by self-interest and that of their clique. What an egotistical world it is, to be sure! They would confine a melancholy youth in a gloomy house, among afflicted persons, and give him nothing to do but brood, and so turn the scale against his reason; but *I* have my children's interest at heart more than my own. I shall send him abroad, and so amuse his mind with fresh objects, break off sad

¹ So novices sitting at a conjuror see him take a wedding-ring, and put it in a little box before a lady; then cross the theatre with another little box, and put that before another lady. "Hey presto! pass!" in box 2 is discovered a wedding-ring, which is instantly assumed to be the ring; on this the green minds are fixed, and with this is sham business done. Box 1, containing the real ring all the time, is overlooked; and the confederate, in livery or not, does what he likes with it; imprisons it in an orange — for the good of its health.

So poor Argan, when Fleurant enumerates the consequences of his omitting a single — dose shall I say? — is terrified by the threatened disorders, which succeed to each other logically enough: all the absurdity being in the first link of the chain; and from that his mind is diverted.

associations, and restore him to a brilliant career. I count on you to second me in my little scheme for his good."

"That I will, papa."

"Somehow, I don't know why, he is coolish to me."

"He does not understand you as I do, my own papa."

"But he is affectionate with you, I think."

"Oh, yes, more than ever: trouble has drawn us closer. Papa, in the midst of our sorrow, how much we have to be thankful for to the Giver of all good things!"

"Yes, little angel; and you must improve Heaven's goodness by working on your brother's affection, and persuading him to this Continental tour."

Thus appealed to, Jane promised warmly; and the man of the world, finding he had a blind and willing instrument in the one creature he loved, kissed her on the forehead, and told her to run away, for here was Mr. Skinner, who no doubt wanted to speak on business.

Skinner, who had in fact been holding respectfully aloof for some time, came forward on Jane's retiring, and in a very obsequious tone requested a private interview. Mr. Hardie led the way into the little dining-room.

They were no sooner alone than Skinner left off fawning, very abruptly, and put on a rugged, resolute manner that was new to him. "I am come for my commission," said he sturdily.

Mr. Hardie looked an inquiry.

"Oh, you don't know what I mean, of course," said the little clerk, almost brutally. "I've waited, and waited, to see if you would have the decency, and the gratitude, and the honesty, to offer me a trifle out of it; but I see I might wait till doomsday before you would ever think of thinking of anybody but yourself. So now shell out without more words, or I'll blow the gaff."

The little wretch raised his voice louder and louder at every sentence.

“Hush! hush! Skinner,” said Mr. Hardie anxiously, “you are under some delusion. When did I ever decline to recognize your services? I always intended to make you a present, a handsome present.”

“Then why didn’t ye *do* it without being forced? Come, sir, you can’t draw the wool over Noah Skinner’s eyes: I have had you watched, and you are looking towards the United States, and that is too big a country for me to hunt you in. I’m not to be trifled with: I’m not to be palavered: give me a thousand pounds of it this moment, or I’ll blow the whole concern, and you along with it.”

“A thousand pounds?”

“Now look at that!” shrieked Skinner. “Serves me right for not saying seven thousand. What right have you to a shilling of it more than I have? If I had the luck to be a burglar’s pal instead of a banker’s, I should have half. Give it me this moment, or I’ll go to Albion Villa and have you took up for a thief, as you are.”

“But I haven’t got it on me.”

“That’s a lie: you carry it where *he* did, close to your heart: I can see it bulge; there, Job was a patient man, but his patience went at last.” With this he ran to the window and threw it open.

Hardie entreated him to be calm. “I’ll give it you, Skinner,” said he, “and with pleasure, if you will give me some security that you will not turn round, as soon as you have got it, and be my enemy.”

“Enemy of a gent that pays me a thousand pounds? nonsense! Why should I? We are in the same boat; behave like a man, and you know you have nothing to fear from me; but I will — not — go halves in a theft for nothing, would *you*? Come, how is it to be, peace or

war? Will you be content with thirteen thousand pounds that don't belong to you, not a shilling of it, or will you go to jail a felon, and lose it every penny?"

Mr. Hardie groaned aloud, but there was no help for it. Skinner was on sale, and *must* be bought.

He took out two notes for five hundred pounds each, and laid them on the table, after taking their numbers.

Skinner's eyes glistened. "Thank you, sir," said he. He put them in his pocket. Then he said quietly, "Now you have taken the numbers, sir, so I'll trouble you for a line to make me safe against the criminal law. You are a deep one: you might say I robbed you."

"That is a very unworthy suspicion, Skinner, and a childish one."

"Oh, it is diamond cut diamond. A single line, sir, just to say that in return for his faithful services, you have given Noah Skinner two notes for five hundred pounds, Nos. 1084 and 85."

"With all my heart, on your giving me a receipt for them."

It was Skinner's turn to hesitate. After reflecting, however, on all the possible consequences, he saw nothing to fear, so he consented.

The business completed, a magic change took place in the little clerk. "Now we are friends again, sir, and I'll give you a piece of advice: mind your eye with Mr. Alfred: he is down on us."

"What do you mean?" inquired Mr. Hardie with ill-disguised anxiety.

"I'll tell you, sir. He met me this morning, and says he to me, 'Skinner, old boy, I want to speak a word to you.' He puts his hands on my shoulder, and turns me round, and says he all at one time, 'The fourteen thousand pounds!' You might have knocked me down with a feather. And he looked me through like a gim-

let. mind ye. 'Come now,' says he, 'you see I know all; make a clean breast of it.' So then I saw he didn't know *all*, and I brazened up a bit: told him I hadn't a notion what he meant. 'Oh, yes, I did,' he said; 'Captain Dodd's fourteen thousand pounds! It had passed through my hands.' Then I began to funk again at his knowing that: perhaps he only guessed it after all; but at the time I thought he knew it: I was flustered, ye see. But I said, 'I'd look at the books, but I didn't think his deposit was anything like that.'—'You little equivocating humbug,' says he, 'and which was better, to tell the truth at once and let Captain Dodd, who never did me any harm, have his own, or to hear it told me in the felon's dock?' Those were his words, sir, and they made my blood run cold; and if he had gone on at me like that, I should have split, I know I should, but he just said, 'There, your face has given your tongue the lie: you haven't brains enough to play the rogue.' Oh, and another thing: he said he wouldn't talk to the sparrow-hawk any more, when there was the kite hard by, so by that I guess your turn is coming, sir, so mind your eye. And then he turned his back on me with a look as if I was so much dirt. But I didn't mind that: I was glad to be shut of him at any price."

This intelligence discomposed Mr. Hardie terribly: it did away with all hope that Alfred meant to keep his suspicions to himself. "Why did you not tell me this before?" said he reproachfully.

Skinner's sharp visage seemed to sharpen as he replied, "Because I wanted a thousand pounds first."

"Curse your low cunning!"

Skinner laughed. "Good-by, sir; take care of yourself, and I'll take care of mine. I'm afraid of Mr. Alfred and the stone jug, so I'm off to London, and there I'll un-Skinner myself into Mr. Something or

other, and make my thousand pounds breed ten." And he whipped out, leaving his master filled with rage and dismay.

"Outwitted even by this little wretch!"

He was now accountable for fourteen thousand pounds, and had only thirteen thousand left, if forced to reimburse; so that it was quite on the cards for him to lose a thousand pounds by robbing his neighbor and risking his own immortal jewel. This galled him to the quick, and altogether his equable temper began to give way: it had already survived half the iron of his nerves. He walked up and down the parlor, chafing like an irritated lion. In which state of his mind the one enemy he now feared and hated walked quietly into the room, and begged for a little serious conversation with him.

"It is like your effrontery," said Mr. Hardie; "I wonder you are not ashamed to look your father in the face."

"Having wronged nobody, I can look anybody in the face," replied Alfred, looking him in the face point-blank.

At this swift rejoinder, Mr. Hardie felt like a too confident swordsman, who, attacking in a passion, suddenly receives a prick that shows him his antagonist is not one to be trifled with. He was on his guard directly, and said coldly, "You have been belying me to my very clerk."

"No, sir, you are mistaken: I have never mentioned your name to your clerk."

Mr. Hardie reflected on what Skinner had told him, and found he had made another false move. He tried again, "Nor to the Dodds?" with an incredulous sneer.

"Nor to the Dodds," replied Alfred calmly.

"What, not to Miss Julia Dodd?"

"No, sir, I have seen her but once, since — I discovered about the fourteen thousand pounds."

“What fourteen thousand pounds?” inquired Mr. Hardie, innocently.

“What fourteen thousand pounds!” repeated the young man, disdainfully. Then suddenly turning on his father, with red brow and flashing eyes, “The fourteen thousand pounds Captain Dodd brought home from India: the fourteen thousand pounds I heard him claim of you with curses; ay! miserable son and miserable man that I am! I heard my own father called a villain; and what did my father reply? Did you hurl the words back into your accuser’s throat? No: you whispered, ‘Hush! hush! I’ll bring it you down.’ Oh, what a hell shame is!”

Mr. Hardie turned pale, and almost sick. With these words of Alfred’s fled all hope of ever deceiving him.

“There, there,” said the young man, lowering his voice from rage to profound sorrow: “I don’t come here to quarrel with my father, nor to insult him, God knows; and I entreat you for both our sakes not to try my temper too hard by these childish attempts to blind me; and, sir, pray dismiss from your mind the notion that I have disclosed to any living soul my knowledge of this horrible secret. On the contrary, I have kept it gnawing my heart, and almost maddening me at times. For my own personal satisfaction I have applied a test both to you and Skinner, but that is all I have done: I have not told dear Julia, nor any of her family, and now, if you will only listen to me, and do what I entreat you to do, she shall never know; oh, never!”

“Oho!” thought Mr. Hardie, “he comes with a proposal. I’ll hear it, any way.”

He then took a line well known to artful men: he encouraged Alfred to show his hand, maintaining a complete reserve as to his own. “You say you did not communicate your illusion about this fourteen thousand

pounds to Julia Dodd that night: may I ask then (without indiscretion) what did pass between you two?"

"I will tell you, sir. She saw me standing there, and asked me in her own soft angel voice if I was unhappy. I told her I must be a poor creature if I could be happy. Then she asked me, with some hesitation, I thought, why I was unhappy. I said, because I could not see the path of honor and duty clear; that, at least, was the purport. Then she told me that in all difficulties she had found the best way was to pray to God to guide her; and she begged me to lay my care before Him and ask His counsel. And then I thanked her, and bade her good-night, and she me; and that was all that passed between us two unhappy lovers, whom you have made miserable, and even cool to one another, but not hostile to you. And you played the spy on us, sir, and misunderstood us, as spies generally do. Ah, sir! a few months ago you would not have condescended to that."

Mr. Hardie colored, but did not reply. He had passed from the irritable into the quietly vindictive stage.

Alfred then deprecated further discussion of what was past, and said abruptly, "I have an offer to make you: in a very short time I shall have ten thousand pounds; I will not resign my whole fortune; that would be unjust to myself and my wife; and I loathe and despise injustice in all its forms, however romantic or plausible. But, if you will give the Dodds their fourteen thousand pounds, I will share my little fortune equally with you, and thank you, and bless you. Consider, sir, with your abilities and experience five thousand pounds may yet be the nucleus of a fortune; a fortune built on an honorable foundation. I know you will thrive with my five thousand pounds, ten times more than with their fourteen thousand; and enjoy the blessing of blessings, a clear conscience."

Now this offer was no sooner made than Mr. Hardie shut his face, and went to mental arithmetic, like one doing a sum behind a thick door. He would have taken ten thousand: but five thousand did not much tempt him: besides, would it be five thousand clear? He already owed Alfred two thousand five hundred. It flashed through him that a young man who loathed and despised injustice — even to himself — would not consent to be diddled by him out of one sum while making him a present of another: and then there was Skinner's thousand to be reimbursed. He therefore declined in these terms: —

“This offer shows me you are sincere in these strange notions you have taken up. I am sorry for it: it looks like insanity. These nocturnal illusions, these imaginary sights and sounds, come of brooding on a single idea, and often usher in a calamity one trembles to think of. You have made me a proposal: I make you one; take a couple of hundred pounds (I'll get it from your trustees), and travel the Continent for four months; enlarge and amuse your mind with the contemplation of nature and manners and customs; and if that does not clear this phantom fourteen thousand pounds out of your head, I am much mistaken.”

Alfred replied that foreign travel was his dream: but he could not leave Barkington while there was an act of justice to be done.

“Then do *me* justice, boy,” said Mr. Hardie, with wonderful dignity, all things considered. “Instead of brooding on your one fantastical idea, and shutting out all rational evidence to the contrary, take the trouble to look through my books: and they will reveal to you a fortune, not of fourteen thousand, but of eighty thousand pounds, honorably sacrificed in the vain struggle to fulfil my engagements: who, do you think, will

believe, against such evidence, the preposterous tale you have concocted against your poor father? Already the tide is turning, and all, who have seen the accounts of the bank, pity me; they will pity me still more if ever they hear my own flesh and blood insults me in the moment of my fall; sees me ruined by my honesty, and living in a hovel, yet comes into that poor but honest abode, and stabs me to the heart by accusing me of stealing fourteen thousand pounds: a sum that would have saved me, if I could only have laid my hands on it."

He hid his face to conceal its incongruous expression: and heaved a deep sigh.

Alfred turned his head away and groaned.

After awhile he rose from his seat and went to the door; but seemed reluctant to go: he cast a longing, lingering look on his father, and said beseechingly, "Oh, think! you are not my flesh and blood more than I am yours; is all the love to be on my side? have I no influence even when right is on my side?" Then he suddenly turned and threw himself impetuously on his knees. "Your father was the soul of honor; your son loathed fraud and injustice from his cradle; you stand between two generations of Hardies, and belong to neither; do but reflect one moment how bright a thing honor is, how short and uncertain a thing life is, how sure a thing retribution is, in this world or the next: it is your guardian angel that kneels before you now, and not your son; oh, for Christ's sake, for my mother's sake, listen to my last appeal. You don't know me: I cannot compound with injustice. Pity me, pity her I love, pity yourself!"

"You young viper!" cried the father, stung with remorse but not touched with penitence. "Get away, you amorous young hypocrite; get out of my house, get out of my sight, or I shall spurn you and curse you at my feet."

"Enough!" said Alfred, rising and turning suddenly calm as a statue: "let us be gentlemen, if you please, even though we must be enemies. Good-by, my father that *was*."

And he walked gently out of the room, and, as he passed the window, Mr. Hardie heard his great heart sob.

He wiped his forehead with his handkerchief. "A hard tussle," thought he, "and with my own unnatural, ungrateful flesh and blood; but I have won it: he hasn't told the Dodds; he never will: and, if he did, who would believe him, or them?"

At dinner there was no Alfred; but after dinner a note to Jane informing her he had taken lodgings in the town, and requesting her to send his books and clothes in the evening. Jane handed the note to her father and sighed deeply. Watching his face as he read it, she saw him turn rather pale, and look more furrowed than ever.

"Papa!" said she, "what *does* it all mean?"

"I am thinking."

Then, after a long pause, he ground his teeth and said, "It means — war: war between my own son and me."

CHAPTER XXV.

LONG before this open rupture Jane Hardie had asked her father sorrowfully, whether she was to discontinue her intimacy with the Dodds: she thought of course he would say "Yes;" and it cost her a hard struggle between inclination and filial duty to raise the question. But Mr. Hardie was anxious her friendship with that family should continue; it furnished a channel of news, and in case of detection might be useful to avert or soften hostilities; so he answered rather sharply, "On no account: the Dodds are an estimable family: pray be as friendly with them as ever you can." Jane colored with pleasure at this most unexpected reply: but her wakeful conscience reminded her this answer was given in ignorance of her attachment to Edward Dodd; and urged her to confession. But at that nature recoiled: Edward had not openly declared his love to her; so modest pride, as well as modest shame, combined with female cowardice to hold back the avowal.

So then Miss Tender Conscience tormented herself; and recorded the struggle in her diary; but briefly, and in terms vague and typical; not a word about "a young man" — or "crossed in love" — but one obscure and hasty slap at the carnal affections, and a good deal about the "saints in prison," and "the battle of Armageddon."

Yet to do her justice, laxity of expression did not act upon her conduct and warp that, as it does most mystical speakers.

To obey her father to the letter, she maintained a friendly correspondence with Julia Dodd, exchanging

letters daily; but, not to disobey him in the spirit, she ceased to visit Albion Villa. Thus she avoided Edward, and extracted from the situation the utmost self-denial, and the least possible amount of "carnal pleasure," as she naïvely denominated an interchange of worldly affection, however distant and respectful.

One day she happened to mention her diary, and say it was a present comfort to her, and instructive to review. Julia, catching at every straw of consolation, said she would keep one too, and asked a sight of Jane's for a model. "No, dear friend," said Jane: "a diary should be one's self on paper."

This was fortunate: it precluded that servile imitation, in which her sex excels even mine; and consequently the two records reflect two good girls, instead of one in two skins; and may be trusted to conduct this narrative forward, and relieve its monotony a little: only of course the reader must not expect to see the plot of a story carried minutely out in two crude compositions written with an object so distinct: he must watch for glimpses and make the most of indications. Nor is this an excessive demand upon his intelligence; for, if he cannot do this with a book, how will he do it in real life, where male and female characters reveal their true selves by glimpses only, and the gravest and most dramatic events give the diviner so few and faint signs of their coming?

EXTRACTS FROM JULIA DODD'S DIARY.

"Dec. 5. It is all over; they have taken papa away to an asylum: and the house is like a grave, but for our outbursts of sorrow. Just before he went away the medal came — oh, no, I cannot. Poor, poor mamma!

"8 P.M. In the midst of our affliction Heaven sent us a ray of comfort: the kindest letter from a lady, a perfect

stranger. It *came* yesterday ; but now I have got it to copy : oh, bless it ; and the good, kind writer.

DEAR MADAM, — I scarcely know whether to hope or to fear that your good husband may have mentioned my name to you ; however, he is just the man to pass over both my misbehavior and his own gallantry ; so I beg permission to introduce myself. I and my little boy were passengers by the *Agra* ; I was spoiled by a long residence in India, and gave your husband sore trouble by resisting discipline, refusing to put out my light at nine o'clock, and in short by being an unreasonable woman, or rather, a spoiled child. Well, all my little attempts at a feud failed ; Captain Dodd did his duty, and kept his temper provokingly : the only revenge he took was a noble one ; he jumped into the sea after my darling Freddy, and saved him from a watery grave, and his mother from madness or death ; yet he was himself hardly recovered from a wound he had received in defending us all against pirates. Need I say more to one who is herself a mother ? You will know how our little misunderstanding ended after that. As soon as we were friends I made him talk of his family ; yourself, Edward, Julia, I seem to know you all.

When the ruffian, who succeeded our good captain, had wrecked poor us, and then deserted us, your husband resumed the command, and saved Freddy and me once more by his courage, his wonderful coolness, and his skill. Since then the mouse has been at work for the lion ; I despair of conveying any pleasure by it to a character so elevated as Captain Dodd ; his reward must be his own conscience ; but we poor little women like external shows, do we not ? and so I thought a medal of the Humane Society might give some pleasure to you and Miss Dodd. Never did medal nor order repose on a nobler heart. The case was so strong, and so well supported, that the society did not hesitate : and you will receive it very soon after this.

You will be surprised, dear madam, at all this from a stranger to yourself, and will, perhaps, set it down to a wish to intrude on your acquaintance. Well, then, dear madam, you will not be far wrong. I *should* like much to know one whose

character I already seem acquainted with ; and to convey personally my gratitude and admiration of your husband ; I could pour it out more freely to you, you know, than to him.

I am,

Dear madam,

Yours very faithfully,

LOUISA BERESFORD.

“And the medal came about an hour before the fly to take him away. His dear name was on it, and his brave, courageous acts.

“Oh, shall I ever be old enough and hard enough to speak of this without stopping to cry ?

“We fastened it round his dear neck with a ribbon. Mamma would put it inside his clothes for fear the silver should tempt some wretch ; I should never have thought of that : is there a creature so base ? And we told the men how he had gained it (they were servants of the asylum), and we showed them how brave and good he was, and would be again if they would be kind to him and cure him. And mamma bribed them with money to use him kindly : I thought they would be offended and refuse it : but they took it, and their faces showed she was wiser than I am. *He* keeps away from us too. It is nearly a fortnight now.

“Dec. 7. Aunt Eve left to-day. Mamma kept her room and could not speak to her : cannot forgive her interfering between papa and her. It does seem strange that any one but mamma should be able to send papa out of the house, and to such a place ; but it is the law ; and Edward, who is all good-sense, says it was necessary : he says mamma is unjust : grief makes her unreasonable. I don't know who is in the right, and I don't much care : but I know I am sorry for Aunt Eve, and very, very sorry for mamma.

“Dec. 8. I am an egotist : found myself out this morn-

ing; and it is a good thing to keep a diary. It¹ was overpowered at first by grief for mamma: but now the house is sad and quiet: I am always thinking of *him*; and that is egotism.

“Why *does* he stay away so? I almost wish I could think it was coldness or diminished affection; for I fear something worse; something to make *him* wretched. Those dreadful words papa spoke before he was afflicted! words I will never put on paper; but they ring in my ears still; they appall me: and then found at their very door! Ah, and I knew I *should* find him near that house. And now *he* keeps away.

“Dec. 9. All day trying to comfort mamma. She made a great effort, and wrote to Mrs. Beresford.

POOR MAMMA'S LETTER.

DEAR MADAM, — Your kind and valued letter reached us in deep affliction, and I am little able to reply to you as you deserve. My poor husband is very ill; so ill that he no longer remembers the past, neither the brave acts that have won him your esteem, nor even the face of his loving and unhappy wife, who now thanks you with many tears for your sweet letter. Heart-broken as my children and I are, we yet derive some consolation from it. We have tied the medal round his neck, madam, and thank you far more than we can find words to express.

In conclusion, I pray Heaven, that in your bitterest hour, you may find the consolation you have administered to us: no, no, I pray you may never, never stand in such need of comfort. I am, dear madam,

Yours gratefully and sincerely,

LUCY DODD.

“Dec. 10, Sunday. At St. Anne's in the morning. Tried hard to apply the sermon. He spoke of griefs, but *so* coldly; surely he never felt one: *he* was not there. Mem.:

¹ Egotism. The abstract quality evolved from the concrete term egotist by feminine art, without the aid of grammar.

always pray against wandering thoughts on entering church.

“Dec. 11. A diary is a dreadful thing. Everything must go down now, and, amongst the rest, that the poor are selfish. I could not interest one of mine in mamma’s sorrows; no, they must run back to their own little sordid troubles, about money and things. I was so provoked with Mrs. Jackson (she owes mamma so much) that I left her hastily: and that was impatience. I had a mind to go back to her; but would not; and that was pride. Where is my Christianity?”

“A kind letter from Jane Hardie. But no word of *him*.

“Dec. 12. To-day Edward told me plump I must not go on taking things out of the house for the poor; mamma gave me the reason. ‘We are poor ourselves, thanks to’ — And then she stopped. Does she suspect? How can she? She did not hear those two dreadful words of papa’s. They are like two arrows in my heart. And so we are poor: she says we have scarcely anything to live upon after paying the two hundred and fifty pounds a year for papa.

“Dec. 13. A comforting letter from Jane. She sends me Heb. xii. 11, and says, ‘Let us take a part of the Bible, and read two chapters prayerfully, at the same hour of the day: will ten o’clock in the morning suit you? and, if so, will you choose where to begin?’ I will, sweet friend, I will: and then, though some cruel mystery keeps us apart, our souls will be together over the sacred page, as I hope they will one day be together in heaven; yours will, at any rate. Wrote back, yes, and a thousand thanks, and should like to begin with the Psalms; they are sorrowful, and so are we. And I must pray not to think too much of *him*.

“If everything is to be put down one does, I cried

long and bitterly to find I had written that I must pray to God against *him*.

“Dec. 14. It is plain he never means to come again. Mamma says nothing, but that is out of pity for me; I have not read her dear face all these years for nothing. She is beginning to think him unworthy, when she thinks of him at all. There is a mystery; a dreadful mystery: may he not be as mystified, too, and perhaps tortured like me with doubts and suspicions? they say he is pale and dejected. Poor thing! But then, oh, why not come to me and say so? Shall I write to him? No, I will cut my hand off sooner.

“Dec. 16. A blessed letter from Jane. She says, ‘Letter-writing on ordinary subjects is a sad waste of time and very unpardonable among His people.’ And so it is; and my weak hope, daily disappointed, that there may be something in her letter, only shows how inferior I am to my beloved friend. She says, ‘I should like to fix another hour for us two to meet at the throne together: will five o’clock suit you? we dine at six, but I am never more than half an hour dressing.’

“The friendship of this saint, and her bright example, is what Heaven sends me in infinite mercy and goodness to soothe my aching heart a little: for *him* I shall never see again.

“I have seen him this very evening.

“It was a beautiful night: I went to look at—the world to come I call it—for I believe the redeemed are to inhabit those very stars hereafter, and visit them all in turn—and this world I now find is a world of sorrow and disappointment—so I went on the balcony to look at a better one: and oh, it seemed so holy, so calm, so pure, that heavenly world: I gazed and stretched my hands towards it for ever so little of its holiness and purity; and that moment, I heard a sigh. I looked, and

there stood a gentleman just outside our gate, and it was *him*. I nearly screamed, and my heart beat so. He did not see me; for I had come out softly, and his poor head was down, down upon his breast; and he used to carry it so high, a little, little while ago; too high, some said; but not I. I looked, and my misgivings melted away; it flashed on me as if one of those stars had written it with its own light in my heart — ‘There stands grief, not guilt.’ And before I knew what I was about, I had whispered ‘Alfred!’ The poor boy started and ran towards me, but stopped short and sighed again. My heart yearned; but it was not for me to make advances to him, after his unkindness; so I spoke to him as coldly as ever I could, and I said, ‘You are unhappy.’

“He looked up to me, and then I saw even by that light that he is enduring a bitter, bitter struggle; *so* pale, *so* worn, *so* dragged! — Now how many times have I cried this last month? more than in all the rest of my life, a great deal. — ‘Unhappy!’ he said; ‘I must be a contemptible thing if I was not unhappy.’ And then he asked me, should not I despise him if he was happy. I did not answer that; but I asked him why he was unhappy. And when I had, I was half frightened, for he never evades a question the least bit.

“He held his head higher still, and said, ‘I am unhappy because I cannot see the path of honor.’

“Then I babbled something, I forget what: then he went on like this — ah, I never forget what *he* says — he said Cicero says *Æquitas ipsa lucet per se*; something *significat*¹ something else: and he repeated it slowly for me, he knows I know a little Latin; and told me that was as much as to say, ‘Justice is so clear a thing, that whoever hesitates must be on the road of wrong. ‘And yet,’ he said bitterly, ‘I hesitate and doubt, in a matter of

¹ *Dubitatio cogitationem significat injuriæ.*

right and wrong, like an academic philosopher weighing and balancing mere speculative straws.' Those were his very words. 'And so,' said he, 'I am miserable; deserving to be miserable.'

"Then I ventured to remind him that he, and I, and all Christian souls, had a resource not known to heathen philosophers, however able. And I said, 'Dear Alfred, when I am in doubt and difficulty, I go and pray to Him, to guide me aright: have you done so?' No, that had never occurred to him; but he *would*, if I made a point of it; and at any rate he could not go on in this way; I should soon see him again, and, once his mind was made up, no shrinking from mere consequences, he promised me. Then we bade one another good-night, and he went off holding his head as proudly as he used: and poor silly me fluttered, and nearly hysterical, as soon as I quite lost sight of him.

"Dec. 17. At church in the morning: a good sermon. Notes and analysis. In the evening Jane's clergyman preached. She came. Going out I asked her a question about what we had heard; but she did not answer me. At parting she told me she made it a rule not to speak coming from church, not even about the sermon. This seemed austere to poor me. But of course she is right. Oh, that I was like her!

"Dec. 18. Edward is coming out. This boy, that one has taught all the French, all the dancing, and nearly all the Latin he knows, turns out to be one's superior, infinitely: I mean in practical good-sense. Mamma had taken her pearls to the jeweller and borrowed two hundred pounds. He found this out and objected. She told him a part of it was required to keep him at Oxford. 'Oh, indeed,' said he: and we thought of course there was an end; but next morning he was off before breakfast, and the day after he returned from Oxford with his

caution money, forty pounds, and gave it mamma; she had forgotten all about it. And he had taken his name off the college books and left the university forever. The poor, gentle tears of mortification ran down his mother's cheeks, and I hung round her neck, and scolded him like a vixen; as I am. We might have spared tears and fury both, for he is neither to be melted nor irritated by poor little us. He kissed us and coaxed us like a superior being, and set to work in his quiet, sober, ponderous way, and proved us a couple of fools to our entire satisfaction, and that without an unkind word: for he is as gentle as a lamb, and as strong as ten thousand elephants. He took the money back, and brought the pearls home again, and he has written 'SOYEZ DE VOTRE SIÈCLE' in great large letters, and has pasted it on all our three bedroom-doors, inside. And he has been all these years quietly cutting up the *Morning Advertiser*, and arranging the slips with wonderful skill and method. He calls it 'digesting the 'Tiser!' and you can't ask for any *modern* information, great or small, but he'll find you something about it in this digest. Such a folio! It takes a man to open and shut it. And he means to be a sort of little papa in this house, and mamma means to let him. And indeed, it is *so* sweet to be commanded; besides, it saves thinking for one's self, and that *is* such a worry.

"Dec. 19. Yes, they have settled it: we are to leave here, and live in lodgings to save servants. How we are to exist even so, mamma cannot see, but Edward can; he says we two have got popular talents, and *he knows the markets* (what does that mean, I wonder?), and the world in general. I asked him wherever he picked it up, his knowledge: he said, 'In the 'Tiser.' I asked him would he leave the place where *she* lives. He looked sad, but said, 'Yes: for the good of us all.' So he is better than I am: but who is not? I wasted an imploring look on

him; but not on mamma; she looked back to me, and then said sadly, 'Wait a few days, Edward, for — *my* sake.' That meant for poor credulous Julia's, who still believes in him. My sweet mother!

"Dec. 21. Told mamma to-day I would go for a governess, to help her, since we are all ruined. She kissed me and trembled; but she did not say 'No;' so it will come to that. He will be sorry. When I do go, I think I shall find courage to send him a line: just to say I am sure *he* is not to blame for withdrawing. Indeed, how could I ever marry a man whose father I have heard my father call — (The pen was drawn through the rest.)

"Dec. 22. A miserable day: low-spirited and hysterical. We are really going away. Edward has begun to make packing-cases; I stood over him and sighed, and asked him questions: he said he was going to take unfurnished rooms in London, send up what furniture is absolutely necessary, and sell the rest by auction, with the lease of our dear, dear house, where we were all so happy once. So, what with his 'knowledge of the markets, and the world,' and his sense, and his strong will, we have only to submit. And then he is so kind, too: 'Don't cry, little girl,' he said. 'Not but what I could turn on the waters myself if there was anything to be gained by it. *Shall* I cry, *Ju*,' said he, 'or shall I whistle? I think I'll whistle.' And he whistled a tune right through while he worked with a heart as sick as my own, perhaps. Poor Edward!

"Dec. 23. My Christian friend has her griefs too. But then *she* puts them to profit; she says to-day, 'We are both tasting the same flesh-crucifying but soul-profitting experience.' Her every word is a rebuke to me; torn at this solemn season of the year with earthly passions. Went down after reading her letter, and played and sang the Gloria in Excelsis of Pergolesi, with all my soul. So

then I repeated it, and burst out crying in the middle. Oh, shame ! shame !

“ Dec. 24. Edward started for London at five in the morning to take a place for us. The servants were next told, and received warning ; the one we had the poorest opinion of, she is such a flirt, cried, and begged mamma to let her share our fallen fortunes, and said she could cook a little and would do her best. I kissed her violently, and quite forgot I was a young lady till she herself reminded me ; and she looked frightened at mamma. But mamma only smiled through her tears, and said, ‘ Think of it quietly, Sarah, before you commit yourself.’

“ I am now sitting in my old room, cold as a stone ; for I have packed up some things ; so the first step is actually taken. Oh, if I but knew that he was happy ! Then I could endure anything. But how can I think so ? Well, I will go, and never tell a soul what I suspect, and he cannot tell, even if he knows, for it is his father. Jane, too, avoids all mention of her own father and brother more than is natural. Oh, if I could only be a child again !

“ Regrets are vain ; I will cease even to record them ; these diaries feed one’s selfishness, and the unfortunate passion that will make me a bad daughter and an ungrateful soldier of Him who was born as to-morrow : to your knees, false Christian ! to your knees !

“ I am calmer now ; and feel resigned to the will of Heaven, or benumbed, or something. I will pack this box and then go down and comfort my mother, and visit my poor people, perhaps for the last time ; ah me !

“ A knock at the street-door ! his knock ! I know every echo of his hand, and his foot. Where is my composure now ? I flutter like a bird. I will not go down. He will think I love him so.

“At least I will wait till he has nearly gone.

“Elizabeth has come to say I am wanted in the drawing-room.

“So I *must* go down whether I like or no.

“Bedtime. Oh, that I had the pen of a writer to record the scene I have witnessed, worthily! When I came in, I found mamma and him both seated in dead silence. He rose and looked at me and I at him, and years seemed to have rolled over his face since last I saw it; I was obliged to turn my head away; I courtesied to him distantly, and may Heaven forgive me for that; and we sat down, and presently turned round and all looked at one another like the ghosts of the happy creatures we once were altogether.

“Then Alfred began, not in his old imperative voice, but scarce above a whisper; and oh, the words such as none but himself in the wide world would have spoken! I love him better than ever; I pity him; I adore him; he is a scholar; he is a chevalier; he is the soul of honor; he is the most unfortunate and proudest gentleman beneath the sun; O my darling! my darling!

“He said, ‘Mrs. Dodd, and you, Miss Dodd, whom I loved before I lost the right to ask you to be mine, and whom I shall love to the last hour of my miserable existence, I am come to explain my own conduct to you, and to do you an act of simple justice, too long delayed. To begin with myself, you must know that my understanding is of the academic school; I incline to weigh proofs before I make up my mind. But then I differ from that school in this, that I cannot think myself to an eternal standstill (such an expression! but what does that matter, it was *his*). I am a man of action; in Hamlet’s place I should have either turned my ghost into ridicule, or my uncle into a ghost; so I kept away

from you while in doubt, but now I doubt no longer. I take my line; ladies, you have been swindled out of a large sum of money.'

"My blood ran cold at these words. Surely nothing on earth but a man could say this right out like that.

"Mamma and I looked at one another; and what did I see in her face, for the first time? Why, that she had her suspicions too, and had been keeping them from me. Pitying angel!

"He went on: 'Captain Dodd brought home several thousand pounds?'

"Mamma said 'Yes.' And I think she was going to say how much, but he stopped her and made her write the amount in an envelope, while he took another and wrote in it with his pencil; he took both envelopes to me, and asked me to read them out in turn; I did, and mamma's said fourteen thousand pounds; and his said fourteen thousand pounds. Mamma looked such a look at me.

"Then he turned to me: 'Miss Dodd, do you remember that night you and I met at Richard Hardie's door? Well, scarce five minutes before that, your father was standing on our lawn and called to the man, who was my father, in a loud voice—it rings in my ears now—"Hardie! villain! give me back my money, my fourteen thousand pounds! give me my children's money, or may your children die before your eyes." Ah, you wince to hear me whisper these dreadful words; what if you had been where I was and heard them spoken, and in a terrible voice; the voice of despair, the voice of truth! Soon a window opened cautiously, and a voice whispered, "Hush! I'll bring it you down." And *this* voice was the voice of fear, of dishonesty, and of Richard Hardie.'

"He turned deadly white when he said this, and I cried to mamma, 'Oh, stop him! stop him!' And she

said, 'Alfred, think what you are saying. Why do you tell us what we had better never know?' He answered directly, —

"Because it is the truth; and because I loathe injustice. Some time afterwards I taxed Mr. Richard Hardie with this fourteen thousand pounds; and his face betrayed him. I taxed his clerk, Skinner; and Skinner's face betrayed him; and he fled the town that very night.'

"My mother looked much distressed, and said, 'To what end do you raise this pitiable subject? Your father is a bankrupt, and we but suffer with the rest.'

"'No, no,' said he, 'I have looked through the bankrupt's books, and there is no mention of the sum. And then who brought Captain Dodd here? Skinner; and Skinner is his detected confederate. It is clear to me poor Captain Dodd trusted that sum to *us* before he had the fit; beyond this all is conjecture.'

"Mamma looked at me again, and said, 'What *am* I to do, or say?'

"I screamed, 'Do nothing, say nothing; oh, pray, pray make him hold his tongue, and let the vile money go. It is not *his* fault.'

"'Do?' said the obstinate creature; 'why, tell Edward, and let him employ a sharp attorney; you have a supple antagonist, and a daring one. Need I say I have tried persuasion, and even bribes; but he defies me. Set an attorney on him, or the police. *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum.*' I put both hands out to him and burst out, 'O Alfred, why did you tell? A son expose his own father? For shame; for shame! I have suspected it all long ago; but *I* would never have told.'

"He started a little, but said, 'Miss Dodd, you were very generous to me; but that is not exactly a reason why I should be a cur to you, and an accomplice in a

theft by which you suffer. I have no pretensions to religion like my sister; so I can't afford to tamper with plain right and wrong. What, look calmly on, and see one man defraud another? I can't do it. See *you* defrauded? you, Mrs. Dodd, for whom I profess affection and friendship? You, Miss Dodd, for whom I profess love and constancy? Stand and see you swindled into poverty? Of what do you think I am made? My stomach rises against it, my blood boils against it, my flesh creeps at it, my soul loathes it; ' then after this great burst he seemed to turn *so* feeble. 'Oh,' said he, faltering, 'I know what I have done; I have signed the death-warrant of our love, dear to me as life. But I can't help it. O Julia, Julia, my lost love, you can never look on me again; you must not love a man you cannot marry, Cheat Hardie's wretched son. But what could I do? Fate offers me but the miserable choice of desolation or cowardly rascality. I choose desolation. And I mean to stand by my choice like a man. So good-by, ladies.'

"The poor, proud creature rose from his seat, and bowed stiffly and haughtily to us both, and was going away without another word, and I do believe forever. But his soul had been too great for his body; his poor lips turned pale, and he staggered, and would have fallen, but mamma screamed to me, and she he loves so dearly, and abandons so cruelly, woke from a stupor of despair, and flew and caught him fainting in these arms.

CHAPTER XXVI.

“WE laid the poor, proud creature on the sofa, and bathed his face with eau de Cologne. He spoke directly, and said that was nice, and ‘His head! his head!’ And I don’t think he was ever quite insensible, but he did not know what was going on, for presently he opened his eyes wide, and stared at us so, and then closed them with, oh, such a sigh; it swelled my heart almost to bursting. And to think I could say nothing; but mamma soothed him and insisted on his keeping quiet; for he wanted to run away from us. She was never so good to him before; she said, ‘My dear child, you have my pity and my esteem; alas! that at your age you should be tried like this. How few in this sorry world would have acted like you; I should have sided with my own flesh and blood, for one.’

“‘What, right or wrong?’ he asked.

“‘Yes,’ said she, ‘right or wrong.’ Then she turned to me: ‘Julia, shall all the generosity be on his side?’

“I kissed her and clung to her, but dared not speak; but I was mad enough to hope, I scarcely know what, till she said in the same kind, sorrowful voice, ‘I agree with you; you can never be my son, nor Julia’s husband. But as for that money, it revolts me to proceed to extremes against one, who after all is your father, my poor, poor, chivalrous boy.’ But she would decide nothing without Edward; he had taken his father’s place in this house. So then I gave all up, for Edward is made of iron. Alfred was clearer-sighted than I, and never had a hope; he put his arm round mamma and kissed her,

and she kissed him; and he kissed my hand and crept away, and I heard his step on the stair, and on the road ever so far, and life seemed ended for me when I heard it no more.

“Edward has come home. Mamma told him all: he listened gravely; I hung upon his lips, and at last the oracle spoke, and said, ‘This is a nice muddle.’

“More we could not get from him; he must sleep on it. O suspense! you torture! He had seen a place he thinks will suit us; it is a bad omen his saying that so soon after. As I went to bed I could not help whispering, ‘If he and I are parted, so will you and Jane.’ The cruel boy answered me *out loud*, ‘Thank you, little girl; that is a temptation, and you have put me on my guard.’

“Oh, how hard it is to understand a *man!* they *are* so impracticable with their justice and things. I came away with my cheeks burning, and my heart like a stone; to bed, but not to sleep. My poor, poor, unhappy, noble Alfred!

“Dec. 27. Mamma and Edward have discussed it: they say nothing to me. Can they have written to him? I go about my duties like a ghost, and pray for submission to the Divine Will.

“Dec. 28. To-day, as I was reading by main force to Mrs. Eagleton’s sick girl, came Sarah all in a hurry with, I was wanted, miss. But I *would* finish my chapter, and oh, how hard the Devil tried to make me gabble it! so I clenched my teeth at him, and read it as if I was spelling it; and then *didn’t* I fly?

“*He* was there, and they all sat waiting for me. I was hot and cold all at the same time, and he rose and bowed to me, and I courtesied to him, and sat down and took my work, and didn’t know one bit what I was doing.

“And our new oracle, Edward, laid down the law like

anything. 'Look here, Hardie,' said he, 'if anybody but you had told us about this fourteen thousand pounds, I should have set the police on your governor before now. But it seems to me a shabby thing to attack a father on the son's information, especially when it's out of love for one of us he has denounced his own flesh and blood.'

"'No, no,' said Alfred, eagerly, 'out of love of justice.'

"'Ah, you think so, my fine fellow, but you would not have done it for a stranger,' said Edward. Then he went on: 'Of all blunders, the worst is to fall between two stools; look here, mamma; we decide, for the son's sake, not to attack the father; after that it would be very inconsistent to turn the cold shoulder to the son. Another thing, who suffers most by this fraud? why, the man that marries Julia.' Alfred burst out impetuously, 'Oh, prove that to me, and let me be that sufferer.' Edward turned calmly to mamma: 'If the fourteen thousand pounds was in our hands, what should you do with it?'

"The dear thing said she should settle at least ten thousand of it on me, and marry me to this poor motherless boy, 'whom I have learned to love myself,' said she.

"'There,' said Edward, 'you see it is you who lose by your governor's — I won't say what — if you marry my sister.'

"Alfred took his hand and said, 'God bless you for telling me this.'

"Then Edward turned to mamma and me, and said, 'This poor fellow has left his father's house because he wronged us: then this house ought to open its arms to him: that is only justice; but now to be just to our side; I have been to Mr. Crawford, the lawyer, and I find this Hardie junior has ten thousand pounds of his own.'

That ought to be settled on Julia, to make up for what she loses by Hardie senior's — I won't say what.'

“‘If anybody settles any of their trash on *me*, I'll beat them, and throw it in the fire,' said I; ‘and I hate money.’

“The oracle asked me directly did I hate clothes and food, and charity to the poor, and cleanliness, and decency? Then I didn't hate money, ‘for none of these things can exist without money, you little romantic humbug; you shut up!’

“Mamma rebuked him for his expressions, but approved his sentiments. But I did not care for his sentiments, for *he* smiled on me and said, ‘We two are of one mind; we shall transfer our fortune to Captain Dodd, whom my father has robbed. Julia will consent to share my honest poverty.’

“‘Well, we will talk about that,' said Edward pompously.

“‘Talk about it without me, then!’ I cried, and got up, and marched out, indignant; only it was partly my low cunning to hide my face that I could not keep the rapture out of. And, as soon as I had retired with cold dignity, off I skipped into the garden to let my face loose, and I think they sent him after me: for I heard his quick step behind me: so I ran away from him as hard as I could; so of course he soon caught me in the shrubbery where he first asked me to be his; and he kissed both my hands again and again like wildfire, as he is, and he said, ‘You are right, dearest; let them talk of their trash while I tell you how I adore you; poverty with you will be the soul's wealth; even misfortune, by your side, would hardly be misfortune; let all the world go, and let you and I be one, and live together, and die together; for now I see I could not have lived without you, nor without your love.’ And I whispered something

on his shoulder, no matter what; what signifies the cackle of a goose? and we mingled our happy tears, and our hearts, and our souls. Ah, love is a sweet, a dreadful passion; what we two have gone through for one another in a few months! He dined with us, and Edward and he sat a long, long time talking; I dare say it was only about their odious money; still I envied Edward having him so long. But at last he came up, and devoured me with his lovely gray eyes, and I sang him 'Aileen Aroon,' and he whispered things in my ear; oh! such sweet, sweet, idiotic, darling things; I will not part with even the shadow of one of them by putting it on paper, only I am the blessedest creature in all the world, and I only hope to goodness it is not very wicked to be so happy as I am.

"Dec. 31. It is all settled. Alfred returns to Oxford to make up for lost time, the time spent in construing me instead of Greek; and at the end of term he is to come of age and marry — somebody. Marriage! what a word to put down! It makes me tingle; it thrills me; it frightens me deliciously, no, not deliciously, anything but: for suppose, being both of us fiery, and they all say one of them ought to be cold-blooded for a pair to be happy; I should make him a downright bad wife. Why, then, I hope I shall die in a year or two out of my darling's way, and let him have a good one instead. I'd come back from the grave and tear her to pieces.

"Jan. 4. Found a saint in a garret over a stable. Took her my luncheon clandestinely; that is ladylike for 'under my apron,' and was detected and expostulated by Ned. He took me into his studio — it is carpeted with shavings — and showed me the 'Tiser digest, an enormous book he has made of newspaper cuttings all in apple-pie order; and out of this authority he proved vice and poverty abound most wherever there are most

charities. Oh, and 'the poor' a set of intoxicated sneaks, and me a demoralizing influence. It is all very fine, but why are there saints in garrets, and half-starved? that rouses all my evil passions, and I cannot bear it; it *is* no use.

"Jan. 6. Once a gay day, but now a sad one. Mamma gone to see poor papa, where he is. Alfred found me sorrowful, and rested my forehead on his shoulder; that soothed me while it lasted. I think I should like to grow there. Mem.: to burn this diary, and never let a creature see a syllable.

"As soon as he was gone, prayed earnestly on my knees not to make an idol of him. For it is our poor idols that are destroyed for *our* weakness, which, really, I cannot quite see the justice of.

"Jan. 8. Jane does not approve my proposal that we should praise now and then at the same hour instead of always praying. The dear girl sends me her unconverted diary 'to show me she is "a brand."' I have read most of it. But really it seems to me she was always good-ish, only she went to parties, and read novels, and enjoyed society.

"There, I have finished it. Oh, dear, how like her *unconverted* diary is to my *converted* one!

"Jan. 14. A sorrowful day. He and I parted, after a fortnight of the tenderest affection and that mutual respect, without which neither of *us*, I think, could love long. I had resolved to be very brave; but we were alone; and his bright face looked so sad, the change in it took me by surprise, and my resolution failed; I clung to him. If gentlemen could interpret as we can, he would never have left me. It is better as it is. He kissed my tears away as fast as they came; it was the first time he had ever kissed more than my hand, so I shall have that to think of, and his dear, promised let-

ters; but it made me cry more at the time, of course. Some day, when we have been married years and years, I shall tell him not to go and pay a lady for every tear, if he wants her to leave off.

“The whole place so gloomy and vacant now.

“Jan. 20. Poverty stares us in the face. Edward says we could make a modest living in London, and nobody be the wiser; but here we are known, and ‘*must* be ladies and gentlemen, and fools,’ he says. He has now made me seriously promise not to give money and things out of the house to the poor: it is robbing my mother and him. Ah, now I see it *is* nonsense to despise money; here I come home sad from my poor people, and I used to return warm all over. And the poor old souls do not enjoy my sermons half so much as when I gave them nice things to eat along with them.

“The dear boy, that I always loved dearly, but *admire* and love now that he has turned an intolerable tyrant, and he used to be wax, has put down two maids out of our three, and brings our dinner up himself in a jacket, then puts on his coat and sits down with us, and we sigh at him, and he grins and derides us; he does not care one straw for pomp. And mamma and I have to dress one another now, and I like it.

“Jan. 30. He says we may now, by great economy, subsist honestly till my wedding-day; but then, mamma and he must ‘*absquatulate*.’ Oh, what stout hearts men have. They can jest at sorrow even when, in spite of their great thick skins, they feel it. Ah, the real poor are happy; they marry, and need not leave the parish where their mother lives.

“Feb. 4. A kind and most delicate letter from Jane. She says, ‘Papa and I are much grieved at Captain Dodd’s affliction, and deeply concerned at your loss by the bank. Papa has asked Uncle Thomas for two hun-

dred pounds, and I entreat you to oblige *me* by receiving it at my hands, and applying it according to the dictates of your own affectionate heart.'

"Actually, our viceroy will not let me take it; he says he will not accept a crumb from the man who owes us a loaf.

"Feb. 8. Jane mortified, and no wonder. If she knew how very poor we are, she would be surprised as well. I have implored her not to take it to heart, for that all will be explained one day, and she will see we *could* not.

"His dear letters! I feed on them. We have no secrets, no two minds. He is to be a first-class, and then a private tutor. Our money is to go to mamma; it is he and I that are to work our fingers to the bone (I am so happy!), and never let them be driven by injustice from their home. But all this is a great secret. The viceroy will be defeated, only I let him talk till Alfred is here to back me. No, it is *not* just the rightful owner of fourteen thousand pounds should be poor.

"How shallow female education is: I was always led to suppose modesty is the highest virtue. No such thing! Justice is the queen of the virtues. *He* is justice incarnate.

"March 10. On reperusing this diary, it is demoralizing, very: it feeds self. Of all the detestable compositions! Me, me, me, from one end to another; for when it is not about myself it is about Alfred, and that it is my he-me though not my she-one. So now to turn over a new leaf: from this day I shall record only the things that happen in this house, and what my betters say to *me*, not what I say, and the texts and outline of the sermons, and Jane's Christian admonitions."

Before a resolve so virtuous all impure spirits retire, taking off their hats, and bowing down to the very ground, but apprehending small beer.

CHAPTER XXVII.

EXTRACTS FROM JANE HARDIE'S DIARY.

"MARCH 3. In my district again, the first time since my illness, from which I am indeed but half recovered. Spoke faithfully to Mrs. B. about her infidel husband; told her not to try and talk to him, but to talk to God about him. Gave her my tract, 'A quiet heart.' Came home tired. Prayed to be used to sharpen the sickles of other reapers.

"March 4. At St. Philip's to hear the bishop. In the midst of an excellent sermon on Gen. i. 2, he came out with the waters of baptism, to my horror; he disclaimed the extravagant view some of them take, then hankered after what he denied, and then partly unsaid *that*, too. While the poor man was trimming his sails, I slunk behind a pillar in the corner of my pew, and fell on my knees, and prayed ^a against the stream of poison flowing on the congregation. Oh, I felt like Jeremiah in his dungeon.

"In the evening papa forbade me to go to church again; said the wind was too cold. I kissed him, and went up to my room and put my head between the pillows not to hear the bells. Prayed for poor ^b Alfred.

"March 5. Sadly disappointed in J. D. I did hope he was imbittering the world to her by degrees. But for some time past she writes in ill-concealed spirits.

"Another friend, after seeking rest in the world, is now seeking it in ritualism. May both be drawn from their rotten reeds to the cross!

And, oh, this moral may my heart retain,
All hopes of happiness on earth are vain.

“March 6. The cat is out of the bag. She is corresponding with Alfred, indeed she makes no secret of it. Wrote her a faithful letter. Received a short reply, saying I had made her unhappy, and begging me to suspend my judgment till she could undeceive me without giving me too much pain. What mystery is this?

“March 7. Alfred announces his unalterable determination to marry Julia. I read the letter to papa directly. He was silent for a long time, and then said, ‘All the worse for both of them.’ It was all I could do to suppress a thrill of carnal complacency at the thought this might in time pave the way to another union. Even to think of that now is a sin. 1 Cor. vii. 20–4 plainly shows that whatever position ^d of life we are placed in, there it is our duty to abide. A child, for instance, is placed in subjection to her parents, and must not leave them without their consent.

“March 8. Sent two cups of cold water to two fellow-pilgrims of mine on the way to Jerusalem; viz., to E. H., Rom. viii. 1; to Mrs. M., Phil. ii. 27.

“Prayed for increase of humility. I am so afraid my great success ^e in His vineyard has seduced me into feeling as if there was a spring of living water in myself, instead of every drop being derived from the true fountain.

“March 9. Dr. Wycherley closeted two hours with papa; papa had sent for him, I find. What is it makes me think that man is no true friend to Alfred in his advice? I don’t like these roundabout speakers. The lively oracles are not roundabout.

“March 10. My beloved friend and fellow-laborer, Charlotte D—, ruptured a blood-vessel ^x at three p.m., and was conveyed in the chariots of angels to the heav-

enly banqueting-house, to go no more out. May I be found watching.

“March 11. Dreadfully starved with these afternoon sermons. If they go on like this, I really *must* stay at home and feed upon the Word.

“March 12. Alfred has written to his trustees, and announced his coming marriage, and told them he is going to settle all his money upon the Dodds. Papa quite agitated by this news; it did not come from Alfred; one of the trustees wrote to papa. Oh, the blessing of Heaven will never rest on this unnatural marriage. Wrote a faithful letter to Alfred while papa was writing to our trustee.

“March 13. My book on Solomon’s Song now ready for publication; but it is *so* difficult nowadays to find a publisher for such a subject. The rage is for sentimental sermons, or else for fiction *f* under a thin disguise of religious biography.

“March 14. Mr. Plummer, of whose zeal and unction I had heard so much, was in the town, and heard of me, and came to see me by appointment just after luncheon. *Such* a sweet meeting. He came in and took my hand, and in that posture prayed that the Holy Spirit might be with us to make our conversation profitable to us, and redound to His glory. Poor man, his wife leads him a cat-and-dog life, I hear, with her jealousy. We had a *sweet* talk. He admires Canticles almost as much as I do,^z and has promised to take my book and get it cast on the Lord *g* for me.

“March 15. To *please*, one must not be faithful.^h Miss L., after losing all her relations, and at thirty years of age, is to be married next week. She came to me and gushed out about the blessing of having at last one earthly friend to whom she could confide everything. On this I felt it my duty to remind her she might lose

him by death, and then what a blank! and I was going on to detach her from the arm of flesh, when she burst out crying and left me abruptly; couldn't bear the truth, poor woman.

"In the afternoon met *him* and bowed, and longed to speak, but thought it my duty not to; cried bitterly on reaching home.

"March 17. Transcribed all the *i* texts on Solomon's Song. It seems to be the way He*j* has marked out for me to serve Him.

"March 19. Received this letter from Alfred:—

DEAR JANE, — I send you a dozen kisses and a piece of advice: learn more, teach less; study more, preach less; and don't be in such a hurry to judge and condemn your intellectual and moral superiors on insufficient information.

Your affectionate brother,

ALFRED.

A poor return for me loving his soul as my own. I do but advise him the self-denial I myself pursue. Woe be to him if he rejects it.

"March 20. A perverse reply from J. D. I had proposed we should plead for our parents at the throne. She says she fears that might seem like assuming the office of the mediator, and, besides, her mother is nearer heaven than she is. What blindness! I don't know a more thoroughly unhealthy mind than poor Mrs.^k Dodd's. I am learning to pray walking. Got this idea from Mr. Plummer. How closely he walks! His mind so *exactly* suits mine.

"March 22. Alfred returned. Went to meet him at the station. How bright and handsome he looked! He kissed me so affectionately, and was as kind and loving as could be. I, poor unfaithful wretch, went hanging *m* on his arm, and had not the heart to dash his carnal happiness just then.

“He is gone *there*.

“March 24. Stole into Alfred’s lodging when he was out; and, after prayer, pinned Deut. xxvii. 16, Prov. xiii. 1 and xv. 5, and Mark vii. 10, upon his bed-curtains.

“March 25. Alfred has been in my room, and nailed Matt. vii. 1, Mark x. 7, and Ezek. xviii. 20 on my wall. He found my diary, and has read it, not to profit by, alas! but to scoff.”

[Specimen of Alfred’s comments. N.B. — Fraternal criticism.

a. Nolo Episcopari.

b. It’s an ill wind that blows nobody good.

d. The old trick: picking one text, straining it, and ignoring six. So then nobody who is not born married, must get married.

e. Recipe. To know people’s real estimate of themselves, study their language of self-depreciation. If, even when they undertake to lower themselves, they cannot help insinuating self-praise, be sure their humility is a puddle, their vanity is a well. This sentence is typical of the whole diary, or rather Iary; it sounds Publican, smells Pharisee.

x. How potent a thing is language in the hand of a master! Here is sudden death made humorous by a few incongruous phrases neatly disposed.

f. Excuse me, there is still a little market for the liquefaction of Holy Writ, and the perversion of Holy Writ; two deathless arts, which meet in your comment on the song you ascribe to Solomon.

z. More than Mrs. Plummer does, apparently.

g. Apotheosis of the British public. How very like profaneness some people’s piety is!

e. h. Faith, with this school, means anything the opposite of charity.

i. You are morally truthful, but intellectually menda-

cious. The texts on Solomon's Song! You know very well there is not one. No grave writer in all Scripture has ever deigned to cite or notice that coarse composition: *puellarum deliciae*.

j. Modest periphrasis for "I like it." Motto for this diary, "*Ego, et Deus meus.*"

k. In other words, a good, old-fashioned, sober, humble Christian, to whom the daring familiarities of your school seem blasphemies.

m. Here I recognize my sister; somewhat spoiled by a detestable sect, but lovable by nature (which she is forever abusing), and therefore always amiable, when off her guard.]

"March 28. Mr. Crawford the attorney called, and told papa his son had instructed him to examine the trust-deed, and to draw his marriage settlement. Papa treated him with the greatest civility, and brought him the deed. He wanted to take it away to copy, but papa said he had better send a clerk here. Poor papa hid his distress from this gentleman, though not from me, and gave him a glass of wine.

"Then Mr. Crawford chatted, and let out Alfred had asked him to advance a hundred pounds for the wedding presents, etc. Papa said he might do so with perfect safety.

"But the moment he was gone, his whole manner changed. He walked about in terrible anger and agitation, and then sat down and wrote letters; one was to Uncle Thomas, and one to a Mr. Wycherley, I believe a brother of the doctor's. I never knew him so long writing two letters before.

"Heard a noise in the road, and it was Mr. Maxley and the boys after him hooting; they have found out his infirmity. What a savage animal is man, till grace changes him! The poor soul had a stick, and now and

then turned and struck at them; but his tormentors were too nimble. I drew papa to the window, and showed him, and reminded him of the poor man's request. He answered impatiently, what was that to him? 'We have a worse case nearer hand. Charity begins at home.' I ventured to say yes, but it did not begin *and* end at home.

"March 31. Mr. Osmond here to-day; and, over my work, I heard papa tell him Alfred is blackening his character in the town with some impossible story about fourteen thousand pounds. Mr. Osmond very kind and sympathizing; set it all down to illusion; assured papa there was neither malice nor insincerity in it. 'But what the better am I for that?' said poor papa, 'if I am slandered, I am slandered.' And they went out together.

"Papa seems to feel this engagement more than all his troubles, and, knowing by sad experience it is useless to expostulate with Alfred, I wrote a long and faithful letter to Julia just before luncheon, putting it to her as a Christian whether she could reconcile it to her profession to set a son against his father, and marry him in open defiance.

"She replied, three p.m., that her mother approved the marriage, and she owed no obedience, nor affection either, to *my* parent.

"Three-thirty, sent back a line rebuking her for this quibble.

"At five received a note from Mrs. Dodd proposing that the correspondence between myself and her daughter should cease *for the present*.

"Five-thirty, retorted with an amendment that it should cease *forever*. No reply. Such are worldlings! Remonstrance only galls them. And so in one afternoon's correspondence ends one more of my Christian friendships

with persons of my own sex. This is the eighth to which a carnal attachment has been speedily fatal.

“In the evening Alfred came in looking very red, and asked me whether it was not self-reliant and uncharitable of me to condemn so many estimable persons, all better acquainted with the circumstances than I am. I replied with the fifth commandment. He bit his lip and said, ‘We had better not meet again, until you have found out which is worthiest of honor, your father or your brother.’ And with this he left abruptly, and something tells me I shall not see him again. My faithfulness has wounded him to the quick. Alas! Prayed for him, and cried myself to sleep.

“April 4. Met *him* disguised as a common workman, and carrying a sackful of things. I was so shocked, I could not maintain my resolution; I said, ‘O Mr. Edward, what are you doing?’ He blushed a little, but told me he was going to sell some candlesticks and things of his making, and he should get a better price in that dress; all traders looked on a *gentleman* as a thing made to be pillaged. Then he told me he was going to turn them into a bonnet and a wreath; and his beautiful brown eyes sparkled with affection. What egotistical creatures *they* must be! I was quite overcome, and said, ‘Oh, why did he refuse our offer? Did he hate me so very much that he would not even take his due from my hand?’—‘No,’ he said, ‘nobody in our house is so unjust to you as to hate you. My sister honors you, and is very sorry you think ill of her; and as for me, I love, you know how I love you.’ I hid my face in my hands, and sobbed out, ‘Oh! you must not, you must not; my poor father has one disobedient child already.’ He said softly, ‘Don’t cry, dear one; have a little patience; perhaps the clouds will clear, and, meantime, why think so ill of us? Consider, we are four in number, of different dispositions,

yet all of one mind about Julia marrying Alfred. May we not be right? may we not know something we love you too well to tell you?' His words and his rich manly voice were so soothing. I gave him just one hand while I still hid my burning face with the other; he kissed the hand I yielded him, and left me abruptly.

"If Alfred should be right! I am staggered now; *he* puts it so much more convincingly.

"April 5. A letter from Alfred announcing his wedding by special license for the 11th.

"Made no reply. What *could* I say?

"Papa, on my reading it out, left his very breakfast half finished, and packed up his bag and rushed up to London. I caught a side view of his face, and I am miserable. Such a new, such a terrible expression! a vile expression! Heaven forgive me, it seemed the look of one who meditated a *crime*."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE spirit of dissension in Musgrove Cottage penetrated to the very kitchen. Old Betty sided with Alfred, and combated in her place the creed of the parlor. "Why, according to miss, the young sparrows are bound never to fly out of the nest, or else have the Bible flung at 'em. She do go on about God's will; seems to me 'tis His will the world should be peopled by body and beast, — which they are both His creatures — and, by the same toaken, if they don't marry they does wus. Certainly whilst a young man bides at home, it behoves him to be dutiful: but that ain't to say he *is* to bide at home forever. Master Alfred's time is come to leave we, and be master in a house of his own, as his father done before him, which he forgets that now; he is grown to man's estate, and got his mother's money, and no more bound to our master than I be." She said, too, that "parting blights more quarrels than it breeds;" and she constantly invited Peggy to speak up, and gainsay her. But Peggy was a young woman with white eye-lashes, and given to looking down, and not to speaking up; she was always watching Mr. Hardie in company, like a cat cream, and hovering about him when alone. Betty went so far as to accuse her of colloguing with him against Alfred, and of "setting her cap at master," which accusation elicited no direct reply, but stinging innuendoes hours after.

Now, if one looks into the thing, the elements of discord had attacked Albion Villa quite as powerfully as Musgrove Cottage, but had hitherto failed signally; the

mutual affection of the Dodds was so complete, and no unprincipled person among them to split the good.

And, now that the wedding drew near, there was but one joyful heart within the walls, though the others were too kind and unselfish to throw cold water. Mrs. Dodd's own wedding had ended in a piteous separation, and now to part with her darling child and launch her on the uncertain waves of matrimony! She heaved many a sigh when alone, but as there were no bounds to her maternal love, so there were no exceptions to her politeness; over her aching heart she forced on a wedding face, subdued but hopeful, for her daughter, as she would for any other young lady about to be married beneath her roof.

It wanted but six days, when one morning after breakfast the bereaved wife and mother, about to be deserted, addressed her son and viceroy thus: "Edward, we *must* borrow fifty pounds."

"Fifty pounds? what for? who wants that?"

"Why, *I* want it," said Mrs. Dodd, stoutly.

"Oh, if *you* want it — what to do, please?"

"Why, to buy her wedding clothes, dear."

"I thought what her 'I' would come to," said Julia, reproachfully.

Edward shook his head, and said, "He who goes a-borrowing goes a-sorrowing."

"But she is not a he," objected Mrs. Dodd, with the subtlety of a schoolman; "and whoever heard of a young lady being married without some things to be married *in*?"

"Well, I've heard nudity is not the cheese on public occasions; but why not go dressed like a lady as she always does, only with white gloves, and be married without any bother and nonsense?"

"You talk like a boy," said Mrs. Dodd. "I could not

bear it. My poor child!" and she cast a look of tenderest pity on the proposed victim. "Well, suppose we make the poor child the judge," suggested Edward. He then put it to Julia whether, under the circumstances, she would wish them to run in debt, buying her finery to wear for a day. "It was not fair to ask *her*," said Mrs. Dodd with a sigh.

Julia blushed and hesitated, and said she would be candid, and then stopped.

"Ugh!" ejaculated Edward. "This is a bad beginning. Girl's candor! Now for a masterpiece of duplicity."

Julia inquired how he dared; and Mrs. Dodd said warmly that Julia was not like other people, she could be candid: had actually done it, more than once, within her recollection. The young lady justified the exception as follows: "If I was going to be married to myself, or to some gentleman I did not care for, I would not spend a shilling. But I am going to marry *him*; and so — O Edward, think of them saying, 'What has he married? a dowdy: why, she hadn't new things on to go to church with him, — no bonnet, no wreath, no new white dress!' To mortify him the very first day of our" — The sentence remained unfinished, but two lovely eyes filled to the very brim without running over, and completed the sense, and did the viceroy's business though a brother. "Why, you dear little goose," said he; "of course I don't mean that. I have as good as got the things we must buy; and those are a new bonnet" —

"Ah!"

"A wreath of orange blossoms" —

"Oh, you good boy!"

"Four pairs of gloves: two white — one is safe to break — two dark, very dark, invisible green, or visible

black ; last the honeymoon. All the rest you must find in the house."

"What, fit her out with a parcel of old things? Can you be so cruel, so unreasonable, dear Edward?"

"Old things! Why, where is all your gorgeous attire from Oriental climes? I see the splendiferous articles arrive, and then they vanish forever."

"Now, shawls and Indian muslins! pray what use are they to a bride?"

"Why, what looks nicer than a white muslin dress?"

"Married in muslin? The very idea makes me shiver."

"Well, clap her on another petticoat."

"How can you be so childish? Muslin is not *the thing*."

"No more is running in debt."

He then suggested that a white shawl or two should be cut into a bridal dress. A this both ladies' fair throats opened on him with ridicule: cut fifty-guinea shawls into ten-pound dresses! that was male economy, was it? Total: a wedding was a wedding; new things always *had* had to be bought for a wedding, and always would, *in secula seculorum*.

"New things? Yes," said the pertinacious wretch, "but they need not be new-bought things. You ladies go and confound the world's eyes with your own in the drollest way: if gorgeous attire has lain long in your drawers, you fancy t' e worl' will detect on its glossy surface how long you had it, and gloated over it, and made it stale to your eye, before you could bring your mind to wear it. That is your delusion, that and the itch for going out shopping; oh, I'm down on you. Mamma, dear, you open that gigantic wardrobe of yours, and I'll oil my hair, whitewash my mug (a little moan from Mrs. D.), and do the counter-jumping business to

the life; hand the things down to you, unroll 'em, grin, charge you a hundred per cent over value, note them down in a penny memorandum-book, sing out 'Caesh! caesh!' etc., and so we shall get all Julia wants, and go through the ritual of shopping without the substantial disgrace of running in debt."

Mrs. Dodd smiled admiringly, as ladies generally do at the sauciness of a young male, but proposed an amendment. She would open her wardrobe, and look out all the contents for Edward's inspection; and, if the mere sight of them did not convince him they were inappropriate to a bride, why, then she would coincide with his views, and resign her own.

"All right," said he. "That will take a jolly time, I know; so I'll go to my governor first for the bonnet and wreath."

Mrs. Dodd drew in at this last slang word; she had heard young gentlemen apply it to their fathers. Edward, she felt sure, would not so sully that sacred relation: still the word was obnoxious for its past offences, and she froze at it. "I have not the honor to know who the personage is you so describe," said she formally. Edward replied very carelessly that it was an upholsterer at the north end of the town.

"Ah, a tradesman you patronize."

"Humph! Well, yes, that is the word, mamma; haw, haw! I have been making the bloke a lot of oak candlesticks, and human heads with sparkling eyes, for walking-sticks, etc. And now I'll go and draw my — *protégé's* — blunt." The lady's hands were uplifted towards pitying Heaven with one impulse; the young workman grinned. "*Soyons de notre siècle*," said he, and departed whistling in the tenor clef. He had the mellowest whistle.

After a few minutes well spent in deploring the fall

of her Oxonian, and gently denouncing his motto, and his century, its ways, and above all its words, Mrs. Dodd took Julia to her bedroom, and unlocked drawers and doors in her wardrobe; and straightway Sarah, who was hurriedly flogging the chairs with a duster, relaxed, and began to work on a cheval-glass as slowly as if she was drawing Nelson's lions at a thousand pounds the tail. Mrs. Dodd opened a drawer and took out three pieces of worked Indian muslin, a little discolored by hoarding. "There, that must be bleached and make you some wrappers for the honeymoon, if the weather is at all fine, and petticoats to match;" next an envelope consisting of two foolscap sheets tacked. This, carefully undone upon the bed, revealed a Brussels lace flounce and a veil. "It was my own," said Mrs. Dodd softly. "I saved it for you; see, here is your name written on it seventeen years ago. I thought, 'This dear little toddler will have wings some day, and then she will leave me.' But now I am almost afraid to let you wear it; it might bring you misfortune. Suppose after years of wedded love you should be bereaved of" — Mrs. Dodd choked, and Julia's arms were round her neck in a moment.

"I'll risk it," cried she, impetuously. "If it but makes me as beloved as you are, I'll wear it come weal come woe! And then I shall feel it over me at the altar like my guardian angel's wings, my own sweet, darling mamma. Oh, what an idiot, what a wretch I am, to leave you at all!"

This unfortunate, unexpected burst interrupted business sadly. Mrs. Dodd sank down directly on the bed and wept; Julia cried over her, and Sarah plumped herself down in a chair and blubbered. But wedding flowers are generally well watered in the private apartments.

Patient Mrs. Dodd soon recovered herself. "This is

childish of me. When I think that there are mothers who see their children go from the house corpses, not brides, I ought to be ashamed of myself. Come! à l'œuvre. Ah, here is something." And she produced a white China crape shawl. "Oh, how sweet!" said Julia; "why have you never worn it?"

"Dear me, child, what use would things be to those I love, if I went and *wore* them?"

The next article she laid her hand on was a roll of white poplin, and drew an exclamation from Mrs. Dodd herself. "If I had not forgotten this, and it is the very thing. Your dear papa bought me this in London, and I remonstrated with him well for buying me such a delicate thing, only once wear. I kissed it and put it away, and forgot it. They *say*, if you keep a thing seven years—it *is* just seven years since he gave it to me. Really, the dear boy is a witch: this is your wedding dress, my precious precious." She unrolled a few yards on the bed to show it, and asked the gloating Sarah, with a great appearance of consideration, whether they were not detaining her from her occupations.

"Oh, no, mum. This glass have got so dull; I'm just polishing of it a bit. I sha'n't be a minute now, mum."

From silver tissue paper Mrs. Dodd evolved a dress (unmade) of white crape embroidered in true-lover's knots of violet silk, and ears of wheat in gold. Then there was a scream at the glass, and Sarah seen in it with ten claws in the air very wide apart; she had slyly turned the mirror, and was devouring the reflection of the finery, and this last Indian fabric overpowered her. Her exclamation was instantly followed by much polishing, but Mrs. Dodd replied to it after the manner of her sex: "Well, it *is* lovely," said she to Julia; "but where is the one with beetle wings? Oh, here."

"Real beetles' wings, mamma?" inquired Julia.

Yes, love."

"So they are, and how wicked! and what a lovely green! I will never wear them; they are prismatic. Now, if ever I am to be a Christian, I had better begin; everything *has* a beginning. Oh, vanity of women, you stick at nothing! A thousand innocent lives stolen to make one dress!" And she put one hand before her eyes, and with the other ordered the dress back into the wardrobe with genuine agitation.

"My dear, what expressions! And you need not wear it; indeed neither of them is fit for that purpose. But you *must* have a pretty thing or two about you. I have hoarded these a good many years; now it is your turn to have them by you. And let me see; you want a travelling cloak: but the dear boy will not let us; so choose a warm shawl."

A rich but modest one was soon found, and Julia tried it on, arching her supple neck, and looking down over her shoulder to see the effect behind, in which attitude, oh, for an immortal brush to paint her, or anything half as bright, supple, graceful, and every inch a woman! At this moment Mrs. Dodd threw a lovely blue Indian shawl on the bed, galvanizing Sarah so that up went her hands again, and the door opened softly and a handsome head in a paper cap peeped on the scene, inquiring with mock timidity, "May the 'British Workman' come in?" He was invited warmly; Julia whipped his cap off, and tore it in two, reddening, and Mrs. Dodd, intending to compliment his foresight, showed him the bed laden with the treasures they had disinterred from vanity's mahogany tomb.

"Well, mother," said he, "you were right, and I was wrong: they are inappropriate enough, the whole lot."

The ladies looked at one another, and Sarah permitted herself a species of snort.

“Do we want Sarah?” he asked, quietly. She retired bridling.

“Inappropriate?” exclaimed Mrs. Dodd. “There is nothing here unfit for a bride’s trousseau.”

“Good heavens! Would you trick her out like a princess?”

“We must. We are too poor to dress her like a lady.”

“Cinderella; at your service,” observed Julia complacently, and pirouetted before him in her new shawl.

Ideas rejected peremptorily at the time often rankle, and bear fruit by and by. Mrs. Dodd took up the blue shawl, and said she would make Julia a peignoir of it; and the border, being narrowish, would do for the bottom. “That was a good notion of yours, darling,” said she, bestowing a sweet smile on Edward. He grunted. Then she took out a bundle of lace: “Oh, for pity’s sake no more,” cried the “British Workman.”

“Now, dearest, you have interfered once in feminine affairs, and we submitted. But, if you say another word, I will trim her poplin with Honiton two feet deep.”

“Quarter! quarter!” cried Edward. “I’m dumb; grant me but this; have nothing made up for her out of the house: you know there is no dressmaker in Barkington can cut like you: and then that will put some limit to our inconsistency.” Mrs. Dodd agreed; but she must have a woman in to sew.

Edward grunted at this, and said, “I wish I could turn you these gowns with my lathe; what a deal of time and bother it would save. However, if you want any stuffing, come to me; I’ll lend you lots of shavings; make the silk rustle. Oh, here is my governor’s contribution.” And he produced seven pounds ten shillings.

“Now, look there,” said Julia, sorrowfully, “it is money. And I thought you were going to bring me the very bonnet yourself. Then I should have valued it.”

"Oh, yes," replied the young gentleman, ironically; "can I choose a bonnet to satisfy such swells as you and mamma? I'll tell you what I'll do; I'll go with you and *look* as wise as Solomon, all the time you are choosing it."

"A capital plan," said Julia.

Edward then shook his fist at the finery: and retired to work again for his governor: "Flowers," he observed, "are indispensable, at a wedding breakfast; I hear too it is considered the right cheese to add something in the shape of grub." Exit whistling in the tenor clef; and keeping their hearts up, like a man.

So now there were two workshops in Albion Villa; Ned's study, as he called it, and the drawing-room: in the former shavings flew, and settled at their ease, and the whirr of the lathe slept not; the latter was all patterns, tapes, hooks and eyes, whalebone, cuttings of muslin, poplin and paper; clouds of lining muslin, snakes of piping; skeins, shreds; and the floor literally sown with pins, escaped from the fingers of the fair, those taper fingers so typical of the minds of their owners: for they have softness, suppleness, nimbleness, adroitness, and "a plentiful lack" of tenacity.

The days passed in hard work, and the evenings in wooing, never sweeter than when it has been so earned: and at last came the wedding eve. Dr. Sampson, who was to give the bride away, arrived just before dinner-time: the party, including Alfred, sat down to a charming little dinner; they ate beetles' wings, and drank Indian muslin fifteen years in the wood. For the lathe and the chisel proved insufficient, and Julia having really denied herself, as an aspirant to Christianity, that assassin's robe, Mrs. Dodd sold it under the rose to a fat old dowager — for whom nothing was too fine — and so kept up appearances.

Julia and Alfred were profoundly happy at bottom; yet their union was attended with too many drawbacks for boisterous gayety, and Alfred, up to this time, had shown a seriousness and sobriety of bliss, that won Mrs. Dodd's gratitude: it was the demeanor of a delicate mind; it became his own position, at odds with his own flesh and blood for Julia's sake; it became him as the son-in-law of a poor woman so lately bereaved of her husband, and reduced to poverty by one bearing the name of Hardie.

But now Dr. Sampson introduced a gayer element. He had seen a great deal of life; i.e., of death and trouble. This had not hardened him, but, encountering a sturdy, valiant, self-protecting nature, had made him terribly tough and elastic; it was now his way never to go forward or backward a single step after sorrow. He seldom mentioned a dead friend or relation; and, if others forced the dreary topic on him, they could never hold him to it; he was away directly to something pleasant or useful, like a grasshopper skipping off a grave into the green grass. He had felt keenly about David while there was anything to be done: but now his poor friend was in a madhouse, thanks to the lancet: and there was an end of *him*. Thinking about him would do him no good. The present only is irresistible; past and future ill the mind can bar out by a resolute effort. The bride will very likely die of her first child! Well then, forget that just now. Her father is in an asylum! Well then, don't remember him at the wrong time: there sit female beauty and virtue ready to wed manly wit and comeliness, seated opposite; see their sweet stolen glances; a few hours only between them and wedded rapture: and I'm here to give the lovely virgin away: fill the bumper high! *dum vivimus vivamus*. In this glorious spirit he rattled on, and soon drew the young

people out, and silvery peals of laughter rang round the genial board.

This jarred on Mrs. Dodd. She bore it in silence some time; but with the grief it revived and sharpened by contrast, and the polite effort to hide her distress, found herself becoming hysterical: then she made the usual signal to Julia, and beat an early retreat. She left Julia in the drawing-room, and went and locked herself in her own room. "Oh, how can they be so *cruel* as to laugh and giggle in my David's house!" She wept sadly, and for the first time felt herself quite lonely in the world: for what companionship between the gay and the sad-hearted? Poor thing, she lived to reproach herself even with this, the nearest approach she ever made to selfishness.

Ere long she crept into Julia's room and humbly busied herself packing her trunks for the wedding tour. The tears fell fast on her white hands.

She would not have been left alone a minute if Julia's mind had not been occupied just then with an affectionate and amiable anxiety: she earnestly desired to reconcile her Alfred and his sister before the wedding; and she sat in the drawing-room thinking whether it could be done, and how.

At last she sat down blushing, and wrote a little note, and rang the bell for Sarah, and sent it courageously into the dining-room.

Sarah very prudently listened at the keyhole before entering; for she said to herself, "If they are talking free, I sha'n't go in till it's over."

The persons so generously suspected were discussing a parchment Alfred had produced, and wanted signed: "You are our trustee, my boy," said he to Edward: "so just write your name here, and mine comes here, and the witnesses there: the doctor and Sarah will do. Send for a pen."

"Let's read it first, please."

"Read it! What for?"

"Catch me signing a paper without reading it, my boy."

"What, can't you trust me?" inquired Alfred, hurt.

"Oh, yes. And can't you trust me?"

"There's a question: why, I have appointed you my trusty in the deed; he, he!"

"Well, then, trust me without my signing, and I'll trust you without reading."

Sampson laughed at this retort, and Alfred reddened; he did not want the deed read. But while he hesitated Sarah came in with Julia's note, asking him to come to her for a minute. This sweet summons made him indifferent to prosaic things. "Well, read away," said he: "one comfort, you will be no wiser."

"What, is it in Latin?" asked Edward, with a wry face.

"No such luck. Deeds used to be in Latin; but Latin could not be made obscure enough. So now dark deeds are written in an unknown tongue called 'Lawyerish,' where the sense is 'as one grain of wheat in two bushels of chaff,' pick it out if you can."

"Whatever man has done, man may do," said Dr. Sampson, stoutly. "You have rid it, and yet understood it: so why mayn't we, ye monster o' conceit?"

"Read it?" said Alfred. "I never read it: would not read it for a great deal of money. The moment I saw what a senseless rignarole it was, I flung it down and insisted on the battological author furnishing me with an English translation. He complied: the crib occupies just twenty lines; the original three folio pages, as you see. That crib, gentlemen," added he, severely, "is now in my waistcoat pocket; and you shall never see it — for your impudence. No, seat yourselves

by that pool of parchment (*sedet eternumque sedebit*, etc.), and fish for Lawyer Crawford's ideas, *rari nantes in gurgite vasto*." And with this he flew up-stairs on the wings of love. Julia met him in the middle of the room, all in a flutter: "It is to ask you a favor. I am unhappy — about one thing."

She then leaned one hand softly on his shoulder, and curving her lovely, supple neck, looked round into his face and watched it as she preferred her petition: "It is about Jane and you. I cannot bear to part you two in this way: only think, six days you have not spoken, and I am the cause."

"Not the only cause, love."

"I don't know, darling. But it is very cruel. I have got my dear mother and Edward; you have nobody — but me. Alfred," said she with gentle impetuosity, "now is the time; your papa is away."

"Oh, is he?" said Alfred, carelessly.

"Yes. Sarah says Betty says he is gone to Uncle Thomas. So I know you won't refuse me, my own Alfred: it is to go to your sister this minute and make it up."

"What, and leave you?" objected Alfred, ruefully.

"No, no; you are with the gentlemen, you know: you are not here, *in reality*, till tea. Make them an excuse: say the truth; say it is me: and come back to me with good news."

He consented on these terms.

Then she armed him with advice: "You go to make peace; it is our last chance; now remember, you must be very generous, very sweet-tempered. Guard against your impetuosity. Do take warning by me; see how impetuous I am. And then, you know, after all, she is only a lady, and a great creature like you ought not to be ruffled by anything so small as a lady's tongue: the

idea! And, dearest, don't go trusting to your logic, but *do* descend to the arts of persuasion, because they are far more convincing somehow: please try them."

"Yes. Enumerate them."

"Why, kissing, and coaxing, and — don't ask *me*."

"Will you bestow a specimen of those arts on me, if I succeed?"

"Try me," said she: and looked him earnestly in the face; but lowered her long lashes slowly and shyly, as she realized to what her impetuosity was pledging itself.

Alfred got his hat and ran to Musgrove Cottage.

A man stepped out of the shadow of a hedge opposite Albion Villa, and followed him, keeping in shadow as much as possible.

The door of Musgrove Cottage was opened to him by old Betty with a joyful start: "Mr. Alfred, I *declare!* Come in: there's only me and miss: master is in Yorkshire, and that there crocodile, Peggy, she is turned away — for sauce — and a good riddance of bad rubbish. Miss is in the parlor."

She ushered him triumphantly in. Jane was seated reading: she dropped her book, and ran and kissed him with a cry of joy. So warm a reception surprised him agreeably, and simplified his task. He told her he was come to try and make it up with her before the wedding. "We lose your presence, dear Jenny," said he, "and that is a great grief to us, valuing you as we do; don't refuse us your good wishes to-morrow."

"Dearest Alfred," said she, "can you think it? I pray for you day and night; and I have begun to blame myself for being so sure you were in the wrong and poor papa faultless. What you sent me half in jest, I take in earnest. 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.'"

"Why, Jenny," said Alfred, "how red your eyes are!"

At this observation the young saint laid her head on her brother's shoulder and had a good cry like any other girl. When she recovered a little she told him, yes, she had been very unhappy; that he had always been a dear good brother to her, and the only one she had, and that it cut her to the heart not to be at his wedding, it seemed so unkind.

Alfred set her on his knee, — she had more soul than body, — and kissed her and comforted her; and, in this happy revival of natural affection, his heart opened, he was off his guard, and told her all; gave her the several proofs their father had got the fourteen thousand pounds. Jane, arrested by the skill and logical clearness with which he marshalled the proofs, listened in silence, and presently a keen shudder ran through her frame, and reminded him he was setting a daughter against her father.

“There,” said he, “I always said I would never tell you, and now I've done it. Well, at least you will see with what consideration and unheard-of leniency the Dodds for our sake are treating Mr. Richard Hardie. Just compare their conduct to him with his to them. And which is most to his advantage? that I should marry Julia, and give Mrs. Dodd the life interest in my ten thousand pounds, to balance his dishonesty, or for him to be indicted as a thief? Ned Dodd told us plainly he would have set the police on him, had any other but his son been the informant.”

“Did *he* say that? O Alfred! this is a miserable world.”

“I can't see that: it is the jolliest world in the world; everything is bright and lovely, and everybody is happy except a few sick people, and a few peevish ones that run to meet trouble. To-morrow I marry my sweet Julia. Richard Hardie will find we two don't molest him,

nor trouble our heads about him : he will get used to us, and one fine day we shall say to him, 'Now we know all about the fourteen thousand pounds : just leave it by will to dear Jenny, and let my friend Dodd marry her, and you can enjoy it unmolested for your lifetime.' He will consent, and you will marry Ned, and then you'll find the world has been wickedly slandered by dishonest men and dismal dogs."

In this strain he continued till he made her blush a good deal and smile a little, — a sad smile.

But at last she said, "If I was sure all this is true, I think I should go, with a heavy heart, to your wedding. If I don't, the best part of me will be there, — my prayers, and my warm, warm wishes for you both. Kiss her for me, and tell her so, and that I hope we shall meet round His throne soon, if we cannot meet at His altar to-morrow."

Brother and sister then kissed one another affectionately ; and Alfred ran back like the wind to Albion Cottage. Julia was not in the drawing-room, and some coolish tea was. After waiting half an hour he got impatient, and sent Sarah to say he had a message for her. Sarah went up-stairs to Mrs. Dodd's room, and was instantly absorbed. After waiting again a long time, Alfred persuaded Edward to try his luck. Edward went up to Mrs. Dodd's room, and was absorbed.

The wedding-dress was being solemnly tried on. A clean linen sheet was on the floor, and the bride stood on it, receiving the last touches of the milliner's art. With this and her white poplin and lace veil she seemed framed in white, and her cheeks bloomed so, and her eyes beamed, with excitement and innocent vanity, that altogether she was supernaturally lovely.

Once enter the room enchanted by this snow-clad rose, and — *Vestigia nulla retrorsum.*

However, Edward escaped at last, and told Alfred what was on foot, and drew a picture of the bride with white above and white below.

“Oh, let me see her,” implored the lover.

Edward must ask mamma about that. He did, and mamma said, “Certainly not: the last person in the world that shall see her in her wedding-dress.” But she should come down to him in half an hour. It seemed a very long half-hour. However, by way of compensation, he was alone when she did come. “Good news?” she asked eagerly.

“Capital: we are the best of friends. Why, she is half inclined to *come*.”

“Then—oh, how good you are! oh, how I love you!”

And she flung a tender arm round his neck, like a young goddess making love; and her sweet face came so near his, he had only to stoop a little, and their lips met in a long, blissful kiss.

That kiss was an era in her life. Innocence itself, she had put up her delicious lips to her lover in pure, though earnest affection; but the male fire with which his met them, made her blush as well as thrill, and she drew back a little, abashed and half scared, and nestled on his shoulder, hiding a face that grew redder and redder.

He bent his graceful head, and murmured down to her, “Are you afraid of me, sweetest?”

“Oh, no, no! Yes, a little. I don’t know. I was afraid I had made too free with my treasure: you don’t quite belong to me yet, you know.”

“Oh, yes, I do; and, what is more, you belong to me. Don’t you, sweet rebel?”

“Ah, that I do, heart and soul, my own, own, own.”

A few more soft, delicious murmurs, and then Julia

was summoned to more rites of vanity, and the lovers parted with tender reluctance for those few hours.

Alfred went home to his lodgings.

He had not been there above ten minutes, when he came out hastily, and walked quickly to the "White Lion," the principal inn in Barkington. He went into the stable-yard, and said a few words to the ostler, then returned to his lodgings.

The man followed him at a distance, from Albion Terrace, watched him home, dogged him to the "White Lion," and by and by entered the yard and offered the ostler a glass of ale at the tap.

At Albion Villa they were working on Julia's dresses till past midnight; and then Mrs. Dodd insisted on her going to bed. She obeyed, but when the house was all quiet came stealing out to her mother, and begged to sleep with her. The sad mother strained her in a tearful embrace; and so they passed the night, clinging to one another more as the parting drew near.

Edward arranged the wedding-breakfast for after the ceremony, and sent the ladies up a cup of coffee, and a bit of toast, apiece. They could hardly find appetite even for this, or, indeed, time, there was so much still to do.

At ten o'clock Julia was still in the height of dressing, delayed by contretemps upon contretemps. Sarah and her sister did her hair up too loose, and, being a glorious mass, it threatened all to come down; and, meantime, a hairpin quietly but persistently bored her cream-white poll.

"Oh. run for mamma!" she cried.

Mamma came half dressed, had the hair all down again, and did it up with adroit and loving hand, and put on the orange-wreath, kissed her admiringly, and retired to her own toilet; and the girls began to lace the bride's body.

Bump came Edward's foot against the door, making them all shriek.

"Now I don't want to hurry you; but Dr. Sampson is come."

The handmaids, flustered, tried to go faster; and when the work was done Julia took her little hand-glass and inspected her back. "Oh!" she screamed, "I am crooked. There, go for mamma."

Mamma soon came, and the poor bride held out imploring hands. "I'm all awry: I'm as crooked as a ram's horn."

"La, miss," said Sarah, "it's only behind: nobody will notice it."

"How can they help it? Mamma, *am* I deformed?"

Mrs. Dodd smiled superior, and bade her be calm. "It is the lacing, dear. No, Sarah, it is no use your *pulling* it: all the pulling in the world will not straighten it. I thought so: you have missed the second top hole."

Julia's little foot began to beat a tattoo on the floor. "There is not a soul in the house but you can do the simplest thing. Eyes and no eyes, fingers and no fingers! I never *did*."

"Hush, love, we all do our best."

"Oh, I am sure of that; poor things!"

"*Nobody* can lace you if you fidget about, love," objected Mrs. Dodd.

(Bump.) "Now I don't want to hurry any man's cattle, but the bridesmaids are come."

"Oh, dear! I shall never be ready in time," said Julia; and the tattoo recommenced.

"Plenty of time, love," said Mrs. Dodd, quietly lacing: "not half-past ten yet. Sarah, go and see if the bridegroom has arrived."

Sarah returned with the reassuring tidings that the bridegroom had not yet arrived, though the carriages had.

“Oh, thank Heaven *he* is not come!” said Julia. “If I keep him waiting to-day, he might say, ‘Oho!’”

Under dread of a comment so significant, she was ready at last, and said majestically he might come now whenever he liked.

Meantime, down-stairs an uneasiness of the opposite kind was growing. Ten minutes past the appointed time, and the bridegroom not there. So while Julia, now full dressed, and easy in her mind, was directing Sarah’s sister to lay out her plain travelling-dress, bonnet and gloves, on the bed, Mrs. Dodd was summoned down-stairs. She came down with Julia’s white gloves in her hand, and a needle and thread, the button sewed on by trade’s fair hand having flown at the first strain. Edward met her on the stairs. “What had we better do, mother?” said he *sotto voce*; “there must be some mistake. Can you remember? Wasn’t he to call for me on the way to church?”

“I really do not know,” said Mrs. Dodd. “Is he at the church, do you think?”

“No, no: either he was to call for me here, or I for him. I’ll go to the church, though: it is only a step.”

He ran off, and in a little more than five minutes came into the drawing-room.

“No, he is not there. I must go to his lodgings. Confound him! he has got reading Aristotle, I suppose.”

This passed before the whole party, Julia excepted.

Sampson looked at his watch, and said he could conduct the ladies to the church while Edward went for Alfred. “Division of labor,” said he gallantly, “and mine the delightful half.”

Mrs. Dodd demurred to the plan. She was for waiting quietly in one place.

“Well, but,” said Edward, “we may overdo that; here it is a quarter past eleven, and you know they can’t

be married after twelve. No, I really think you had better all go with the doctor: I dare say we shall be there as soon as you will."

This was agreed on after some discussion. Edward, however, to provide against all contingencies, begged Sampson not to wait for him should Alfred reach the church by some other road. "I'm only groomsman, you know," said he. He ran off at a racing pace. The bride was then summoned, admired, and handed into one carriage with her two bridesmaids, Miss Bosanquet and Miss Darton. Sampson and Mrs. Dodd went in the other; and by half-past eleven they were all safe in the church.

A good many people, high and low, were about the door, and in the pews, waiting to see the beautiful Miss Dodd married to the son of a personage once so popular as Mr. Hardie: it had even transpired that Mr. Hardie disapproved the match. They had been waiting a long time, and were beginning to wonder what was the matter, when, at last, the bride's party walked up the aisle with a bright April sun shining on them through the broad old windows. The bride's rare beauty and stag-like carriage of her head, imperial in its loveliness and orange-wreath, drew a hum of admiration.

The party stood a minute or two at the east end of the church, and then the clergyman came out and invited them into the vestry.

Their reappearance was eagerly expected; in silence at first, but presently in loud and multitudinous whispers.

At this moment, a young lady with almost perfect features and sylph-like figure, modestly dressed in dove-colored silk, but with a new chip bonnet and white gloves, entered a pew near the west door and said a little prayer; then proceeded up the aisle, and exchanged a word with the clerk, then into the vestry.

“Cheep! cheep! cheep!” went fifty female tongues, and the arrival of the bridegroom’s sister became public news.

The bride welcomed her in the vestry with a sweet guttural of surprise and delight, and they kissed one another like little tigers.

“Oh, my darling Jane, how kind of you! have I got you back to make my happiness complete?”

Now none of her own party had thought it wise to tell Julia there was any hitch, but Miss Hardie blurted out, naturally enough, “But where’s Alfred?”

“I don’t know, dear,” said Julia, innocently. “Are not he and Edward in another part of the church? I thought we were waiting till twelve o’clock, perhaps. Mamma dear, you know everything, I suppose this is all right?”

Then, looking round at her friends’ faces, she saw in a moment that it was all wrong. Sampson’s in particular was burning with manly indignation, and even her mother’s discomposed, and trying to smile.

When the innocent saw this, she suspected her beloved was treating her cavalierly, and her poor little mouth began to work, and she had much ado not to whimper.

Mrs. Dodd, to encourage her, told her not to be put out; it had been arranged all along that Edward should go for him: “Unfortunately, we had an impression it was the other way, but now Edward is gone to his lodgings.”

“No, mamma,” said Julia, “Alfred was to call for Edward, because our house was on the way.”

“Are you sure, my child?” asked Mrs. Dodd, very gravely.

“Oh, yes, mamma,” said Julia, beginning to tremble; “at a quarter before eleven; I heard them settle it.”

The matter was terribly serious now; indeed, it began

to look hopeless. Weather overclouded, raindrops falling, and hard upon twelve o'clock.

They all looked at one another in despair.

Suddenly there was a loud, long buzzing heard outside, and the house of God turned into a gossiping fair. "Talk of money-changers," said Satan that day, "give *me* the exchangers of small talk."

"Thank Heaven they are come," said Mrs. Dodd. But, having thus relieved her mind, she drew herself up, and prepared a freezing reception for the defaulter.

A whisper reached their excited ears: "It is young Mr. Dodd!" and next moment Edward came into the vestry — alone. The sight of him was enough — his brow wet with perspiration, his face black and white with bitter wrath.

"Come home, *my* people," he said, sternly; "there will be no wedding here to-day."

The bridesmaids cackled questions at him; he turned his back on them.

Mrs. Dodd knew her son's face too well to waste inquiries. "Give me my child!" she cried, in such a burst of mother's anguish long restrained, that even the insult to the bride was forgotten for one moment, till she was seen tottering into her mother's arms and cringing, and trying to hide bodily in her. "Oh, throw a shawl over me," she moaned; "hide all this."

Well, they all did what they could. Jane hung round her neck and sobbed, and said, "I've a sister now, and no brother." The bridesmaids cried. The young curate ran and got the fly to the vestry-door; "Get into it," he said, "and you will at least escape the curious crowd."

"God bless you, Mr. Hurd," said Edward, half-choked. He hurried the insulted bride and her mother in; Julia huddled and shrank into a corner under Mrs. Dodd's

shawl; Mrs. Dodd had all the blinds down in a moment, and they went home as from a funeral.

Ay, and a funeral it was, for the sweetest girl in England buried her hopes, her laugh, her May of youth, in that church that day.

When she got to Albion Villa, she cast a wild look all around, for fear she should be seen in her wedding-clothes, and darted moaning into the house.

Sarah met her in the hall, smirking, and saying, "Wish you j—"

The poor bride screamed fearfully at the mocking words, and cut the conventional phrase in two as with a razor; then fled to her own room and tore off her wreath, her veil, her pearls, and had already strewed the room, when Mrs. Dodd, with a foot quickened by affection, burst in and caught her half fainting, and laid her, weary as old age, and cold as a stone, upon her mother's bosom, and rocked her as in the days of happy childhood, never to return, and bedewed the pale face with her own tears.

Sampson took the bridesmaids each to her residence, on purpose to leave Edward free. He came home, washed his face, and, sick at heart, but more master of himself, knocked timidly at Julia's door.

"Come in, *my son*," said a broken voice.

He crept in, and saw a sorry sight. The travelling-dress and bonnet were waiting still on the bed; the bridal wreath and veil lay on the floor, and so did half the necklace, and the rest of the pearls all about the floor; and Julia, with all her hair loose and hanging below her waist, lay faintly quivering in her mother's arms.

Edward stood and looked, and groaned.

Mrs. Dodd whispered to him over Julia, "Not a tear! not a tear!"

"Dead, or false?" moaned the girl: "dead, or false?"

Oh, that I could believe he was false ; no, no, he is dead, dead."

Mrs. Dodd whispered again over her girl.

"Tell her something: give us tears—the world for one tear!"

"What shall I say?" gasped Edward.

"Tell her the truth, and trust to God, whose child she is."

Edward knelt on the floor and took her hand.

"My poor little Ju!" he said, in a voice broken with pity and emotion, "would you rather have him dead or false to you?"

"Why, false, a thousand times. It's Edward. Bless your sweet face, my own, own brother; tell me he is false, and not come to deadly harm."

"You shall judge for yourself," he groaned. "I went to his lodgings. He had left the town. The woman told me a letter came for him last night; a letter in—a female hand. The scoundrel came in from us, got this letter, packed up his things directly, paid his lodging, and went off in a two-horse fly at eight o'clock in the morning."

CHAPTER XXIX.

At these plain proofs of Alfred's infidelity, Julia's sweet throat began to swell hysterically, and then her bosom to heave and pant; and, after a piteous struggle, came a passion of sobs and tears so wild, so heart-broken, that Edward blamed himself bitterly for telling her.

But Mrs. Dodd sobbed, "No, no, I would rather have her so; only leave her with me now. Bless you, darling, leave us quickly."

She rocked and nursed her deserted child hours and hours, and so the miserable day crawled to its close.

Down-stairs the house looked strange and gloomy; she, who had brightened it all, was darkened herself. The wedding-breakfast and flowers remained in bitter mockery. Sarah cleared half the table, and Sampson and Edward dined in moody silence.

Presently Sampson's eye fell upon the deed. It lay on a small table, with a pen beside it, to sign on their return from church.

Sampson got hold of it and dived in the verbiage. He came up again with a discovery. In spite of its feebleness, verbosity, obscurity, and idiotic way of expressing itself, the deed managed to convey to David and Mrs. Dodd a life interest in nine thousand five hundred pounds, with reversion to Julia and the children of the projected marriage. Sampson and Edward put their heads over this, and it puzzled them. "Why, man," said Sampson, "if the puppy had signed this last night, he would be a beggar now."

"Ay!" said Edward, "but after all he did not sign it."

"Nay, but that was your fault, not his. The lad was keen to sign."

"That is true; and perhaps if we had pinned him to this, last night, he would not have dared insult my sister to-day."

Sampson changed the subject by inquiring suddenly which way he was gone.

"Curse him, I don't know, and don't care. Go where he will, I shall meet him again some day; and then" — Edward spoke almost in a whisper, but a certain grind of his white teeth and flashing of his lion eyes made the incomplete sentence very expressive.

"What ninnies you young men are," said the doctor; "even you, that I dub 'my fathom o' good-sense.' Just finish your denner, and come with me."

"No, doctor, I'm off my feed for once. If you had been up-stairs and seen my poor sister! Hang the grub, it turns my stomach." And he shoved his plate away, and leaned over the back of his chair.

Sampson made him drink a glass of wine, and then they got up from the half-finished meal, and went hurriedly to Alfred's lodgings; the doctor, though sixty, rushing along with all the fire and buoyancy of early youth. They found the landlady surrounded by gossips curious as themselves, and longing to chatter, but no materials. The one new fact they elicited was that the vehicle was a "White Lion" fly, for she knew the young man by the cast in his eye. "Come away," shouted the doctor, unceremoniously, and in two minutes they were in the yard of the "White Lion."

Sampson called the hostler. Out came a hard-featured man with a strong squint. Sampson concluded this was his man, and said roughly, "Where did you drive young Hardie this morning?"

He seemed rather taken aback by this abrupt question,

but reflected and slapped his thigh. "Why, that is the party from Mill Street."

"Yes."

"Druv him to Silverton Station, sir. And wasn't long about it either; gent was in a hurry."

"What train did he go by?"

"Well, I don't know, sir; I left him at the station."

"Well, then, where did he take his ticket for? Where did he tell the porter he was going? Think now, and I'll give y' a sovereign."

The hostler scratched his head, and seemed at first inclined to guess for the sovereign; but at last said, "I should only be robbing you, gents. Ye see, he paid the fly then and there, and gave me a crown, and I druv away directly."

On this they gave him a shilling, and left him. But on leaving the yard, Edward said, "Doctor, I don't like that fellow's looks; let us try the landlord." They went into the bar and made similar inquiries. The landlord was out; the mistress knew nothing about it, but took a book out of a drawer, and turned over the leaves. She read out an entry to this effect:—

"Pair horse fly to Silverton. Take up in Mill Street at eight o'clock. Is that it, sir?" Sampson assented; but Edward told her the hostler said it was Silverton Station.

"No; it is Silverton in the book, sir. Well, you see, it is all one to us; the station is further than the town, but we charge seven miles whichever 'tis."

Bradshaw, inspected then and there, sought in vain to conceal that four trains reach Silverton from different points between 8.50 and 9.25 A.M.

The friends retired with this scanty information. Alfred could hardly have gone to London; for there was a train up from Barkington itself at 8.30. But he might

have gone to almost any other part of the island, or out of it for that matter. Sampson fell into a brown study.

After a long silence, which Edward was too sad to break, he said thoughtfully, "Bring seeince to bear on this hotch-potch. Facks are never really opposed to facks, they onnly seem to be; and the true solution is the one which riconciles all the facks; for instance, the chronothairmal therey riconciles all th' undisputed facks in midicine. So now saireh for a solution to riconcile the deed with the puppy levanting."

Edward searched, but could find none; and said so.

"Can't you?" said Sampson; "then I'll give you a couple. Say he is touched in the upper story for one."

"What do you mean? mad?"

"Oh, there are degrees of frinzy. Here is th' inconsistency of conduct that marks a disturbance of the reason; and, to tell the truth, I once knew a young fellow that played this very prank at a wedding, and the nixt thing we hard, my lorr'd was in Bedlam."

Edward shook his head. "It is the villain's heart, not his brain."

Sampson then offered another solution, in which he owned he had more confidence.

"He has been courting some other wummun first; she declined, or made believe; but, when she found he had the spirit to go and marry an innocent girl, then the jade wrote to him and yielded. It's a married one, likely. I've known women go further for hatred of a wummun than they would for love of a man; and here was a temptation! to snap a lover off th' altar, and insult a rival, all at one blow. He meant to marry; he meant to sign that deed; ay, and, at his age, even if he had signed it, he would have gone off at passion's call, and beggared himself. What enrages me is that we didn't let him sign it, and so nail the young rascal's money."

“Curse his money,” said Edward, “and him too! Wait till I can lay my hand on him; I’ll break every bone in his skin.”

“And I’ll help you.”

In the morning, Mrs. Dodd left Julia for a few minutes expressly to ask Sampson’s advice. After Alfred’s conduct she was free, and fully determined, to defend herself and family against spoliation by any means in her power; so she now showed the doctor David’s letter about the fourteen thousand pounds; and the empty pocket-book; and put together the disjointed evidence of Julia, Alfred, and circumstances, in one neat and luminous statement: Sampson was greatly struck with the revelation; he jumped off his chair and marched about excited; said truth was stranger than fiction, and this was a manifest swindle; then he surprised Mrs. Dodd in her turn by assuming that old Hardie was at the bottom of yesterday’s business. Neither Edward nor his mother could see that, and said so; his reply was characteristic: “Of course you can’t; you are Anglo-saxins; th’ Anglosaxins are good at drawing distinctions; but they can’t generalize. I’m a Celt, and generalize — as a duck swims. I discovered th’ unity of all disease; it would be odd if I could not trace the manifold iniquities you suffer to their one source.”

“But what is the connecting link?” asked Mrs. Dodd, still incredulous.

“Why, Richard Hardie’s interest.”

“Well, but the letter?” objected Edward.

“There goes th’ Anglosaxin again,” remonstrated Sampson; “puzzling his head over petty details; and they are perhaps mere blinds thrown out by the enemy. Put this and that together; Hardie senior always averse to this marriage; Hardie senior wanting to keep fourteen thousand pounds of yours; if his son, who knows of

the fraud, became your mother's son, the swindle would be hourly in danger (no connection? y' unhappy Anglo-saxins! why, the two things are interwoven). And so young Hardie is got out of the way; old Hardie's doing, or I'm a Dutchman."

This reasoning still appeared forced and fanciful to Edward; but it began to make some little impression on Mrs. Dodd, and encouraged her to own that her poor daughter suspected foul play.

"Well, that is possible too; whatever tempted man has done, tempted man will do; but more likely he has bribed Jezabel to write and catch the goose by the heart. Gintlemen, I'm a bit of a physiognomist; look at old Hardie's lines: his cords I might say; and deeper every time I see him; sirs, there's an awful weight on that man's mind. Looksee! I'll just send a small trifle of a detective down to watch his game, and pump his people; and, as soon as it is safe, we'll seize the old bird, and, once he is trapped, the young one will reappear like magic; th' old one will disgorge; we'll just compound the felony—been an old friend—and recover the cash."

A fine sketch; but Edward thought it desperately wild, and Mrs. Dodd preferred employing a respectable attorney to try and obtain justice in the regular way. Sampson laughed at her; what was the use of attacking in the regular way an irregular genius like old Hardie? "Attorneys are too humdrum for such a job," said he; "they start with a civil letter putting a rogue on his guard; they proceed t' a writ, and then he digs a hole in another county and buries the booty; or sails t' Australia with it. N'list'me; I'm an old friend, and an insane lover of justice—I say insane, because my passion is not returned, or the jade wouldn't keep out of my way so all these years—you leave all this to me."

"Stop a minute," said Edward; "you must not go

compromising us; and we have no money to pay for luxuries, like detectives."

"I won't compromise any one of you; and my detective sha'n't cost y' a penny."

"Ah, my dear friend," said Mrs. Dodd, "the fact is, you do not know all the difficulties that beset us. Tell him, Edward. Well, then, let *me*. The poor boy is attached to this gentleman's daughter, whom you propose to treat like a felon; and he is too good a son and too good a friend for me to — what, what, shall I do?"

Edward colored up to the eyes; "Who told you that, mother?" said he. "Well, yes, I do love her, and I'm not ashamed of it. Doctor," said the poor fellow after awhile, "I see now I am not quite the person to advise my mother in this matter. I consent to leave it in your hands."

And in pursuance of this resolution, he retired to his study.

"There's a domnable combination," said Sampson, dryly. "Truth is sairtainly more wonderful than feckshin. Here's my fathom o' good-sense in love with a wax doll, and her brother jilting his sister, and her father pillaging his mother. It *beats* hotch-potch."

Mrs. Dodd denied the wax doll; but owned Miss Hardie was open to vast objections: "An inestimable young lady; but so odd; she is one of these uneasy-minded Christians that have sprung up; a religious egotist, and *malade imaginaire*, eternally feeling her own spiritual pulse" —

"I know the disorrder," cried Sampson, eagerly; "the pashints have a hot fit (and then they are saints); followed in due course by the cold fit (and then they are the worst of sinners); and so on in endless rotation; and, if they could only realize my great discovery, the perriodicity of all disease, and time their sintiments,

they would find the hot fit and the cold return chronometrically, at intervals as regular as the tide's ebb and flow; and the soul has nothing to do with either febrile symptom. Why, religion, apart from intermittent fever of the brain, is just the calmest, peaceablest, sedatest thing in all the world."

"Ah, you are too deep for me, my good friend. All I know is that she is one of this new school, whom I take the liberty to call 'THE FIDGETY CHRISTIANS.' They cannot let their poor souls alone a minute; and they pester one day and night with the Millennium; as if we shall not all be dead long before that; but the worst is, they apply the language of earthly passion to the Saviour of mankind, and make one's flesh creep at their blasphemies; so coarse, so familiar; like that rude multitude which thronged and pressed Him when on earth. But, after all, she came to the church, and took my Julia's part; so that shows she has *principle*; and do pray spare me her feelings in any step you take against that dishonorable person her father; I must go back to his victim, my poor, poor child; I dare not leave her long. O doctor, such a night! and, if she dozes for a minute, it is to wake with a scream and tell me she sees him dead; sometimes he is drowned; sometimes stained with blood; but always dead."

This evening Mr. Hardie came along in a fly with his luggage on the box, returning to Musgrove Cottage as from Yorkshire; in passing Albion Villa he cast it a look of vindictive triumph. He got home and nodded by the fire in his character of a man wearied by a long journey. Jane made him some tea, and told him how Alfred had disappeared on his wedding-day.

"The young scamp," said he; he added, coolly, "It is no business of mine; I had no hand in making the

match, thank Heaven." In the conversation that ensued, he said he had always been averse to the marriage; but not so irreconcilably as to approve this open breach of faith with a respectable young lady; "This will recoil upon our name, you know, at this critical time," said he.

Then Jane mustered courage to confess that she had gone to the wedding herself: "Dear papa," said she, "it was made clear to me that the Dodds are acting in what they consider a most friendly way to you. They think — I cannot tell you what they think. But, if mistaken, they are sincere; and so, after prayer, and you not being here for me to consult, I did go to the church. Forgive me, papa; I have but one brother; and she is my dear friend."

Mr. Hardie's countenance fell at this announcement, and he looked almost diabolical. But on second thoughts he cleared up wonderfully; "I will be frank with you, Jenny; if the wedding had come off, I should have been deeply hurt at your supporting that little monster of ingratitude; he not only marries against his father's will (that is done every day), but slanders and maligns him publicly in his hour of poverty and distress. But, now that he has broken faith and insulted Miss Dodd as well as me, I declare I am glad you were there, Jenny. It will separate us from his abominable conduct. But what does he say for himself? What reason does he give?"

"Oh, it is all mystery as yet."

"Well, but he must have sent some explanation to the Dodds."

"He may have; I don't know. I have not ventured to intrude on my poor insulted friend. Papa, I hear her distress is fearful; they fear for her reason. Oh, if harm comes to her, God will assuredly punish him

whose heartlessness and treachery has brought her to it. Mark my words," she continued with great emotion, "this cruel act will not go unpunished, even in this world."

"There, there, change the subject," said Mr. Hardie, peevishly. "What have I to do with his pranks? he has disowned me for his father, and I disown him for my son."

The next day Peggy Black called, and asked to see master. Old Betty, after the first surprise, looked at her from head to foot, and foot to head, as if measuring her for a suit of disdain; and told her she might carry her own message; then flounced into the kitchen, and left her to shut the street-door, which she did. She went and dropped her courtesy at the parlor-door, and in a niminy-piminy voice said she was come to make her submission, and would he forgive her, and give her another trial? Her penitence, after one or two convulsive efforts, ended in a very fair flow of tears.

Mr. Hardie shrugged his shoulders, and asked Jane if the girl had ever been saucy to her.

"Oh, no, papa; indeed, I have no fault to find with poor Peggy."

"Well, then, go to your work, and try and not offend Betty; remember she is older than you."

Peggy went for her box and bandbox, and reinstated herself quietly, and all old Betty's endeavors to irritate her only elicited a calm cunning smile, with a depression of her downy eyelashes.

ALBION VILLA.

Next morning Edward Dodd was woke out of a sound sleep at about four o'clock, by a hand upon his shoulder; he looked up, and rubbed his eyes; it was Julia standing by his bedside, dressed, and in her bonnet;

"Edward," she said, in a hurried whisper, "there is foul play; I cannot sleep, I cannot be idle. He has been decoyed away, and perhaps murdered. Oh, pray get up and go to the police office or somewhere with me."

"Very well; but wait till morning."

"No; now; now; now; now. I shall never go out of doors in the daytime again. Wait? I'm going crazy with wait, wait, wait, wait, waiting."

Her hand was like fire on him, and her eyes supernaturally bright.

"There," said Edward with a groan, "go down-stairs, and I will be with you directly."

He came down; they went out together; her little burning hand pinched his tight, and her swift foot seemed scarcely to touch the ground; she kept him at his full stride till they got to the central police station. There, at the very thought of facing men, the fiery innocent suddenly shrank together, and covered her blushing face with her hot hands. She sent him in alone. He found an intelligent superintendent, who entered into the case with all the coolness of an old official hand.

Edward came out to his sister, and as he hurried her home, told her what had passed: "The superintendent asked to see the letter; I told him he had taken it with him; that was a pity, he said. Then he made me describe Alfred to a nicety; and the description will go up to London this morning, and all over Barkington, and the neighborhood, and the county."

She stopped to kiss him, then went on again with her head down, and neither spoke till they were nearly home: then Edward told her the superintendent felt quite sure that the villain was not dead; nor in danger of it.

"Oh, bless him! bless him! for saying so."

"And that he will turn up in London before very long; not in this neighborhood: he says he must have

known the writer of the letter, and his taking his luggage with him shows he has gone off deliberately. My poor little Ju, now do try and look at it as he does, and everybody else does; try and see it as you would if you were a bystander."

She laid her soft hand on his shoulder as if to support herself floating in her sea of doubt: "I do see I am a poor credulous girl; but how *can* my Alfred be false to me? Am I to doubt the Bible? am I to doubt the sun? Is nothing true in heaven or earth? Oh, if I could only have died as I was dressing for church — died while he seemed true! He *is* true: the wicked creature has cast some spell on him: he has gone in a moment of delirium; he will regret what he has done, perhaps regrets it now. I am ungrateful to you, Edward, and to the good policeman, for saying he is not dead. What more do I require? he is dead to me. Edward, let us leave this place. We *were* going: let us go to-day; this very day; oh, take me, and hide me where no one that knows me can ever see me again." A flood of tears came to her relief: and she went along sobbing and kissing her brother's hand every now and then.

But as they drew near the gate of Albion Villa, twilight began to usher in the dawn. Julia shuddered at even that faint light, and fled like a guilty thing, and hid herself sobbing in her own bedroom.

Mr. Richard Hardie slept better now than he had done for some time past, and therefore woke more refreshed and in better spirits. He knew an honest family was miserable a few doors off; but he did not care. He got up and shaved with a mind at ease. One morning when he had removed the lather from one-half his face, he happened to look out of window, and saw on the wall opposite — a placard: a large placard to this effect: —

ONE HUNDRED GUINEAS REWARD!

Whereas on the 11th instant Mr. Alfred Hardie disappeared mysteriously from his lodgings in 15 Mill Street under circumstances suggesting a suspicion of foul play, know all men that the above reward will be paid to any person or persons who shall first inform the undersigned where the said Alfred Hardie is to be found, and what person or persons, if any, have been concerned in his disappearance.

ALEXANDER SAMPSON,
39 Pope Street,
Napoleon Square,
London.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE note Alfred Hardie received on the 10th of April, was from Peggy Black. The letters were well formed, for she had been educated at the national school: but the style was not upon a par.

MR. ALFRED, SIR, — Margaret Black sends her respects, and if you want to know the truth about the money, I can tell you all, and where it is at this present time. Sir, I am now in situation at Silverton Grove House about a furlong from the station; and if you will be so good to call there and ask for Margaret, I will tell you where it is, which I mean the fourteen thousand pounds; for it is a sin the young lady should be beguiled of her own. Only you must please come this evening, or else to-morrow before ten o'clock, by reason my mistress and me we are going up to London that day early, and she talk of taking me abroad along with her.

I remain, sir,

Yours respectfully to command,

MARGARET BLACK.

If you please, sir, not to show this letter on no account.

Alfred read this twice over, and felt a contemptuous repugnance towards the writer, a cashiered servant, who offered to tell the truth out of spite, having easily resisted every worthy motive. Indeed, I think he would have perhaps dismissed the subject into the fire, but for a strange circumstance that had occurred to him this very afternoon; but I had no opportunity to relate it till now. Well, just as he was going to dress for dinner, he received a visit from Dr. Wycherley, a gentleman he

scarcely knew by name. Dr. Wycherley inquired after his cephalalgia; Alfred stared and told him it was much the same; troubled him occasionally.

“And your insomnia?”

“I don’t know the word: have you any authority for it?”

Dr. Wycherley smiled with a sort of benevolent superiority, that galled his patient, and proceeded to inquire after his nightly visions and voices. But at this Alfred looked grave as well as surprised and vexed. He was on his guard now, and asked himself seriously what was the meaning of all this, and could his father have been so mad as to talk over his own shame with this stranger: he made no reply whatever.

Dr. Wycherley’s curiosity was not of a very ardent kind: for he was one of those who first form an opinion, and then collect the materials of one: and a very little fact goes a long way with such minds. So, when he got no answer about the nocturnal visions and voices, he glided calmly on to another matter. “By-the-by, that fourteen thousand pounds!”

Alfred started; and then eyed him keenly: “What fourteen thousand pounds?”

“The fabulous sum you labor under the impression of your father having been guilty of clandestinely appropriating.”

This was too much for Alfred’s patience. “I don’t know who you are, sir,” said he; “I never exchanged but three words in my life with you, and do you suppose I will talk to a stranger on family matters of so delicate a kind as this? I begin to think you have intruded yourself on me simply to gratify an impertinent curiosity.”

“The hypothesis is at variance with my established character,” replied the oleaginous one. “Do me the justice to believe in the necessity of this investigation, and that it is one of a most friendly character.”

"Then I decline the double nuisance: your curiosity and your friendship! Take them both out of my room, sir, or I shall turn them both out by one pair of shoulders."

"You shall smart for this," said the doctor, driven to plain English by anger, that great solvent of circumlocution with which nature has mercifully supplied us. He made to the door, opened it, and said in considerable excitement to some one outside, "Excited! — Very!"

Now Dr. Pleonast had no sooner been converted to the vernacular, and disappeared, than another stranger entered the room: he had evidently been lurking in the passage: it was a man of smallish stature, singularly gaunt, angular, and haggard, but dressed in a spruce suit of black, tight, new, and glossy. In short, he looked like Romeo's apothecary gone to Stultz with the money. He fluttered in with pale cheek and apprehensive body, saying hurriedly, "Now, my *dear* sir, *be* calm: *pray* be calm: I have come down all the way from London to see you, and I am *sure* you won't make me lose my journey; will you now?"

"And pray who asked you to come all the way from London, sir?"

"A person to whom your health is very dear."

"Oh, indeed; so I have secret friends, have I? Well, you may tell my secret, underhand *friends*, I never was better in my life."

"I am truly glad to hear it," said the little man: "let me introduce myself, as Dr. Wycherley forgot to do it." And he handed Alfred a card, on which his name and profession were written.

"Well, Mr. Speers," said Alfred, "I have only a moment to give you, for I must dress for dinner. What do you want?"

"I come, sir, in hopes of convincing your friends you are not so very ill; not incurable. Why, your eye is

steady, your complexion good; a little high with the excitement of this conversation; but, if we can only get over this little delusion, all will be well."

"What little delusion?"

"About the fourteen thousand pounds, you know."

"What fourteen thousand pounds? I have not mentioned fourteen thousand pounds to you, have I?"

"No, sir: you seem to shun it like poison; that is the worst of it; you talk about it to others fast enough; but to Dr. Wycherley and myself, who could cure you of it, you would hide all about it, if you could."

At this Alfred rose and put his hands in his pockets and looked down grimly on his inquisitor. "Mr. Speers," said he, "you had better go. There is no credit to be gained by throwing so small an apothecary as you, out of that window, and *you* won't find it pleasant either; for, if you provoke me to it, I shall not stand upon ceremony; I sha'n't open the window first, as I should for Dr. What's his corf unded name."

At these suggestive words, spoken with suppressed ire and flashing eyes, Speers scuttled to the door crabwise, holding the young lion in check, conventionally; to wit, with an eye as valiant as a sheep's; and a joyful apothecary was he when he found himself safe outside the house and beside Dr. Wycherley, who was waiting for him.

Alfred soon cooled, and began to laugh at his own anger and the unbounded impudence of his visitors: but, on the other hand, it struck him as a grave circumstance that so able a man as his father should stir muddy water; should go and talk to these strangers about the money he had misappropriated. He puzzled himself all the time he was dressing: and, not to trouble the reader with all the conjectures that passed through his mind, he concluded at last, that Mr. Hardie must feel very

strong, very sure there was no evidence against him but his son's, or he would not take the eighth commandment by the horns like this.

"Injustice carries it with a high hand," thought Alfred, with a sigh. He was not the youth to imitate his father's shamelessness: so he locked this last incident in his own breast; did not even mention it to Julia.

But now, on reading Peggy's note, his warlike instincts awoke, and, though he despised his correspondent and her motives, he could not let such a chance pass of defeating brazen injustice. It was unfortunate and awkward to have to go to Silverton on his wedding morning; but, after all, there was plenty of time. He packed up his things at once for the wedding tour, and in the morning took them with him in the fly to Silverton; his plan was to come back direct to Albion Villa: so he went to Silverton Grove full dressed, all ready for the wedding.

As it happened he overtook his friend Peterson just outside the town, called to him gayly, and invited him to church and breakfast.

To his surprise the young gentleman replied sullenly that he should certainly not come.

"Not come, old fellow?" said Alfred, hurt.

"You have a good cheek to ask me," retorted the other.

This led to an explanation. Peterson's complaint was that he had told Alfred he was in love with Julia, and Alfred had gone directly and fallen in love with her just to cut him out.

"What are you talking about?" said Alfred: "so this is the reason you have kept away from me of late: why, I was engaged to her at the very time; only my father was keeping us apart."

"Then why didn't you say so?"

"Because my love is not of the prattling sort."

“Oh, nonsense; I don't believe a word of it.”

“You don't believe my word! Did you ever know me tell a lie? At that rate, think what you please, sir: drive on, Strabo.”

And so ended that little friendship.

On the road our ardent youth arranged in his head a noble scheme. He would bring Peggy Black home with him, compensating her liberally for the place she would thereby lose: would confront her privately with his father, and convince him it was his interest to restore the Dodds their money with a good grace, take the five thousand pounds he had already offered, and countenance the wedding by letting Jane be present at it. It was hard to do all this in the time, but well worth trying for, and not impossible: a two-horse fly is not a slow conveyance, and he offered the man a guinea to drive fast; so that it was not nine o'clock when they reached Silverton Grove House, a place Alfred had never heard of; this, however, I may observe, was no wonder: for it had not borne that name a twelvemonth.

It was a large square mansion of red brick, with stone facings and corners, and with balustrades that hid the garret windows. It stood in its own grounds, and the entrance was through handsome iron gates, one of which was wide open to admit people on foot or horseback. The fly-man got down and tried to open the other, but could not manage it. “There, don't waste time,” said Alfred, impatiently, “let me out.”

He found a notice under the bell, “Ring and enter.” He rang accordingly, and at the clang the hall-door opened, as if he had pulled a porter along with the bell; and a gray-haired servant out of livery stood on the steps to receive him. Alfred hurried across the plat, which was trimmed as neatly as a college green, and asked the servant if he could see Margaret Black.

“Margaret Black?” said the man, doubtfully; “I’ll inquire, sir. Please to follow me.”

They entered a handsome hall, with antlers and armor; from this a double staircase led up to a landing with folding-doors in the centre of it; one of these doors was wide open like the iron gate outside. The servant showed Alfred up the left-hand staircase, through the open door, into a spacious drawing-room, handsomely though not gayly furnished and decorated; but a little darkened by Venetian blinds.

The old servant walked gravely on, and on, till Alfred began to think he would butt the wall; but he put his hand out and opened a door, that might very well escape a stranger’s notice; for it was covered with looking-glass, and matched another narrow mirror in shape and size; this door led into a very long room, as plain and even sordid as the drawing-room was inviting; the unpapered walls were a cold drab, and wanted washing; there was a thick cobweb up in one corner, and from the ceiling hung the tail of another, which the housemaid’s broom had scotched not killed; that side of the room they entered by was all books. The servant said, “Stay here a moment, sir, and I’ll send her to you.” With this he retired into the drawing-room, closing the door softly after him; once closed it became invisible; it fitted like wax, and left nothing to be seen but books; not even a knob. It shut to with that gentle but clean click which a spring bolt, however polished and oiled and gently closed, will emit. Altogether it was enough to give some people a turn. But Alfred’s nerves were not to be affected by trifles; he put his hands in his pockets and walked up and down the room, quietly enough at first, but by and by uneasily. “Confound her for wasting my time,” thought he; “why doesn’t she come?”

Then, as he had learned to pick up the fragments of

time and hated dawdling, he went to take a book from the shelves.

He found it was a piece of iron, admirably painted; it chilled his hand with its unexpected coldness; and all the books on and about the door were iron and chilly.

"Well," thought he, "this is the first dummy ever took me in. What a fool the man must be! Why, he could have bought books with ideas in them for the price of these impostors."

Still Peggy did not come. So he went to a door opposite, and at right angles to the farthest window, meaning to open it and inquire after her; lo and behold! he found this was a knob without a door. There had been a door, but it was blocked up. The only available door on that side had a keyhole, but no latch nor handle.

Alfred was a prisoner.

He no sooner found this out than he began to hammer on the door with his fists, and call out.

This had a good effect, for he heard a woman's dress come rustling: a key was inserted, and the door opened. But, instead of Peggy, it was a tall, well-formed woman of thirty, with dark-gray eyes, and straightish eyebrows, massive and black as jet. She was dressed quietly, but like a lady. Mrs. Archbold, for that was her name, cast on Alfred one of those swift, all-devouring glances, with which her sex contrive to take in the features, character, and dress of a person from head to foot, and smiled most graciously on him, revealing a fine white set of teeth. She begged him to take a seat, and sat down herself. She had left the door ajar.

"I came to see Margaret Black," said Alfred.

"Margaret Black? There is no such person here," was the quiet reply.

"What, has she gone away so early as this?"

Mrs. Archbold smiled, and said, soothingly, "Are

you sure she ever existed; except in your imagination?"

Alfred laughed at this, and showed her Peggy's letter. She ran her eye over it, and returned it him with a smile of a different kind, half pitying, half cynical. But presently resuming her former manner, "I remember now," said she in dulcet tones; "the anxiety you are laboring under is about a large sum of money, is it not?"

"What, can you give me any information about it?" said he, surprised.

"I think we can render you great *service* in the matter, infinite service, Mr. Hardie," was the reply, in a voice of very honey.

Alfred was amazed at this. "You say you don't know Peggy! And yet you seem to know me. I never saw you in my life before, madam; what on earth is the meaning of all this?"

"Calm yourself," said Mrs. Archbold, laying a white and finely moulded hand upon his arm; "there is no wonder nor mystery in the matter; *you were expected.*"

The color rushed into Alfred's face, and he started to his feet; some vague instinct told him to be gone from this place.

The lady fixed her eyes on him, put her hand to a gold chain that was round her neck, and drew out of her white bosom, not a locket, nor a key, but an ivory whistle; keeping her eye steadily fixed on Alfred, she breathed softly into the whistle. Then two men stepped quietly in at the door; one was a short, stout snob, with great red whiskers, the other a wiry gentleman with iron-gray hair. The latter spoke to Alfred, and began to coax him. If Mrs. Archbold was honey, this personage was treacle. "Be calm, my dear young gentleman; don't agitate yourself. You have been sent here for your

good; and that you may be cured, and so restored to society and to your anxious and affectionate friends."

"What are you talking about? what do you mean?" cried Alfred: "are you mad?"

"No, *we* are not," said the short snob, with a coarse laugh.

"Have done with this fooling, then," said Alfred, sharply; "the person I came to see is not here: good-morning."

The short man instantly stepped to the door, and put his back to it. The other said calmly, "No, Mr. Hardie; you cannot leave the house at present."

"Can't I? Why not, pray?" said Alfred, drawing his breath hard; and his eyes began to glitter dangerously.

"We are responsible for your safety; we have force at hand if necessary; pray do not compel us to summon it."

"Why, where am I?" said Alfred, panting now; "is this a prison?"

"No, no," said Mrs. Archbold, soothingly; "it is a place where you will be cured of your headaches and your delusions, and subjected to no unnecessary pain nor restraint."

"Oh, bother!" said the short snob, brutally. "Why make two bites of a cherry? You are in *my* asylum, young gentleman, and a devilish lucky thing for you."

At this fatal word "asylum," Alfred uttered a cry of horror and despair, and his eyes roved wildly round the room in search of escape. But the windows of the room, though outside the house they seemed to come as low as those of the drawing-room, were partly bricked up within, and made just too high to be reached without a chair. And his captors read that wild glance directly, and the doctor whipped one chair away, while Mrs. Archbold,

with more tact, sat quietly down on the other. They all three blew their whistles shrilly.

Alfred uttered an oath and rushed at the door; but heard heavy feet running on stone passages towards the whistles, and felt he had no chance out that way; his dilating eye fell upon the handle of the old defunct door; he made a high leap, came down with his left foot on its knob of brass, and, though of course he could not stand on it, contrived to spring from it slap at the window — Mrs. Archbold screamed — he broke the glass with his shoulder, and tore and kicked the woodwork, and squeezed through on to a stone ledge outside, and stood there bleeding and panting, just as half a dozen keepers burst into the room at his back. He was more than twenty feet from the ground; to leap down was death or mutilation; he saw the fly-man driving away. He yelled to him, “Hy! hy! stop! stop!” The fly-man stopped and looked round. But soon as he saw who it was, he just grinned: Alfred could see his hideous grin; and there was the rattle of chairs, being brought to the window, and men were mounting softly to secure him; a coarse hand stole towards his ankle; he took a swift step and sprang desperately on to the next ledge — it was an old manor house, and these ledges were nearly a foot broad — from this one he bounded to the next, and then to a third, the last but one on this side of the building; the corner ledge was but half the size, and offered no safe footing; but close to it he saw the outside leaves of a tree. That tree then must grow close to the corner; could he but get round to it, he might yet reach the ground whole. Urged by that terror of a madhouse, which is natural to a sane man, and in England is fed by occasional disclosures, and the general suspicion they excite, he leaped on to a piece of stone no bigger than one’s hat, and then whirled himself round into the tree, all eyes to see and claws to grasp.

It was a weeping ash; he could get hold of nothing but soft yielding slivers, that went through his fingers, and so down with him like a bulrush, and souse he went with his hands full of green leaves, over head and ears into the water of an enormous iron tank that fed the baths.

The heavy plunge, the sudden cold water, the instant darkness, were appalling; yet, like the fox among the hounds, the gallant young gentleman did not lose heart nor give tongue. He came up gurgling and gasping, and swimming for his life in manly silence; he swam round and round the edge of the huge tank, trying in vain to get a hold upon its cold rusty walls. He heard whistles and voices about; they came faint to him where he was, but he knew they could not be very far off.

Life is sweet. It flashed across him how, a few years before, an university man of great promise had perished miserably in a tank on some Swiss mountain, a tank placed for the comfort of travellers. He lifted his eyes to heaven in despair and gave one great sob.

Then he turned upon his back and floated; but he was obliged to paddle with his hands a little to keep up.

A window opened a few feet above him, and a face peered out between the bars.

Then he gave all up for lost, and looked to hear a voice denounce him: but no; the livid face and staring eyes at the window took no notice of him; it was a maniac, whose eyes, bereft of reason, conveyed no images to the sentient brain; only by some half-vegetable instinct this darkened man was turning towards the moaning sun, and staring it full in the face; Alfred saw the rays strike and sparkle on those glassy orbs, and fire them; yet they never so much as winked. He was appalled yet fascinated by this weird sight; could not take his eyes off it, and shuddered at it in the very

water. With such creatures as that he must be confined, or die miserably like a mouse in a basin of water.

He hesitated between two horrors.

Presently his foot struck something, and he found it was a large pipe that entered the tank to the distance of about a foot. This pipe was not more than three feet under water, and Alfred soon contrived to get upon it, and rest his fingers upon the iron edge of the tank. The position was painful; yet so he determined to remain till night; and then, if possible, steal away. Every faculty of mind and body was strung up to defend himself against the wretches who had entrapped him.

He had not been long in this position, when voices approached, and next the shadow of a ladder moved across the wall towards him. The keepers were going to search his pitiable hiding-place. They knew, what he did not, that there was no outlet from the premises; so now, having hunted every other corner and cranny, they came, by what is called the exhaustive process of reasoning, to this tank; and when they got near it, something in the appearance of the tree caught the gardener's quick eye. Alfred, quaking, heard him say, "Look here! He is not far from this."

Another voice said, "Then the Lord have mercy on him; why, there's seven foot of water; I measured it last night."

At this Alfred was conscious of a movement and a murmur, that proved humanity was not extinct; and the ladder was fixed close to the tank, and feet came hastily up it.

Alfred despaired.

But, as usual with spirits so quick-witted and resolute, it was but for a moment. "One man in his time plays many animals;" he caught at the words he had heard, and played the game the jackal desperate plays in India,

the fox in England, the elephant in Ceylon: he feigned death; filled his mouth with water, floated on his back paddling imperceptibly, and half closed his eyes.

He was rewarded by a loud shout of dismay just above his head, and very soon another ladder was placed on the other side, and with ropes and hands he was drawn out and carried down the ladder: he took this opportunity to discharge the water from his mouth; on which a coarse voice said, "Look there! *his* troubles are at an end."

However, they laid him on the grass, and sent for the doctor; then took off his coat, and one of them began to feel his heart to see whether there was any pulsation left; he found it thumping. "Look out," he cried in some alarm; "he's shamming, Abraham."

But, before the words were well uttered, Alfred, who was a practised gymnast, bounded off the ground without touching it with his hands, and fled like a deer towards the front of the house: for he remembered the open iron gate: the attendants followed shouting, and whistle answered whistle all over the grounds. Alfred got safe to the iron gate: alas! it had been closed at the first whistle twenty minutes ago. He turned in rage and desperation, and the head keeper, a powerful man, was rushing incautiously upon him. Alfred instantly steadied himself, and with his long arm caught the man in full career a left-handed blow like the kick of a pony, that laid his cheek open and knocked him stupid and staggering; he followed it up like lightning with his right, and, throwing his whole weight into this second blow, sent the staggering man to grass; slipped past another, and skirting the south side of the house got to the tank again well in advance of his pursuers, seized the ladder, carried it to the garden-wall, and was actually half way up it, and saw the open country and liberty,

when the ladder was dragged away and he fell heavily to the ground, and a keeper threw himself bodily on him. Alfred half expected this, and, drawing up his foot in time, dashed it furiously in the coming face, actually knocking the man backwards; another kneeled on his chest; Alfred caught him by the throat so felly that he lost all power, and they rolled over and over together, and Alfred got clear and ran for it again, and got on the middle of the lawn, and hallooed to the house, "Hy! hy! Are there any more sane men imprisoned there? come out, and fight for your lives!" Instantly the open windows were filled with white faces, some grinning, some exulting, all greatly excited; and a hideous uproar shook the whole place — for the poor souls were all sane in their own opinion — and the whole force of attendants, two of them bleeding profusely from his blows, made a cordon and approached him; but he was too cunning to wait to be fairly surrounded; he made his rush at an under keeper, fainted at his head, caught him a heavy blow in the pit of the stomach, doubled him up in a moment, and off again, leaving the man on his knees vomiting and groaning. Several mild maniacs ran out in vast agitation, and to curry favor, offered to help catch him. Vast was their zeal. But when it came to the point, they only danced wildly about and cried, "Stop him! for God's sake stop him! he's ill, dreadfully ill; poor wretch! knock out his brains!" And, whenever he came near them, away they ran whining like kicked curs.

Mrs. Archbold, looking out at a window, advised them all to let him alone, and she would come out and persuade him. But they would not be advised: they chased him about the lawn; but so swift of foot was he, and so long in the reach, that no one of them could stop him, nor indeed come near him, without getting a facer that came like a flash of lightning.

At last, however, they got so well round him, he saw his chance was gone: he took off his hat to Mrs. Archbold at the window, and said quietly, "I surrender to *you*, madam."

At these words they rushed on him rashly; on this he planted two blows right and left, swift as a cat attacked by dogs; administered two fearful black eyes, and instantly folded his arms, saying haughtily, "It was to the lady I yielded, not to you fellows."

They seized him, shook their fists in his face, cursed him, and pinned him; he was quite passive: they handcuffed him, and drove him before them, shoving him every now and then roughly by the shoulders. He made no resistance, spoke no word. They took him to the strong-room, and manacled his ankles together with an iron hobble, and then strapped them to the bedposts, and fastened his body down by broad bands of ticking with leathern straps at the ends: and so left him more helpless than a swaddled infant. The hurry and excitement of defence were over, and a cold stupor of misery came down and sat like lead on him. He lay mute as death in his gloomy cell, a tomb within a living tomb. And, as he lay, deeper horror grew and grew in his dilating eyes: gusts of rage swept over him, shook him, and passed: then gusts of despairing tenderness; all came and went, but his bonds. What would his Julia think? If he could only let her know! At this thought he called, he shouted, he begged for a messenger; there was no reply. The cry of a dangerous lunatic from the strong-room was less heeded here than a bark from any dog-kennel in Christendom. "This is my father's doing," he said. "Curse him! curse him! curse him!" and his brain seemed on fire, his temples throbbled: he vowed to God to be revenged on his father.

Then he writhed at his own meanness in coming to

visit a servant, and his folly in being caught by so shallow an artifice. He groaned aloud. The clock in the hall struck ten. There was just time to get back if they would lend him a conveyance. He shouted, he screamed, he prayed. He offered terms humbly, piteously; he would forgive his father, forgive them all, he would say no more about the money, would do anything, consent to anything, if they would only let him keep faith with his Julia: they had better consent, and not provoke his vengeance. "Have mercy on me!" he cried. "Don't make me insult her I love. They will all be waiting for me. It is my wedding-day; you can't have known it is my wedding-day; fiends, monsters, I tell you it is my wedding-day. Oh, pray send the lady to me: she can't be all stone, and my misery might melt a stone." He listened for an answer, he prayed for an answer. There was none. Once in a madhouse, the sanest man is mad, however interested and barefaced the motive of the relative who has brought two of the most venal class upon the earth to sign away his wits behind his back: and once hobbled and strapped, he is a *dangerous* maniac, for just so many days, weeks, or years, as the hobbles, handcuffs, and jacket happen to be left upon him by inhumanity, economy, or simple carelessness. Poor Alfred's cries and prayers were heard: but no more noticed than the night howl of a wolf on some distant mountain. All was sullen silence, but the grating tongue of the clock, which told the victim of a legislature's shallowness and a father's avarice that Time, deaf to his woe, as were the walls, the men, the women, and the cutting bands, was stealing away with iron finger his last chance of meeting his beloved at the altar.

He closed his eyes, and saw her lovelier than ever, dressed all in white, waiting for him with sweet concern in that peerless face. "Julia! Julia!" he cried, with a

loud heart-broken cry. The half-hour struck. At that he struggled, he writhed, he bounded: he made the very room shake, and lacerated his flesh; but that was all. No answer. No motion. No help. No hope.

The perspiration rolled down his steaming body. The tears burst from his young eyes and ran down his cheeks. He sobbed, and sobbing almost choked, so tight were his linen bands upon his bursting bosom.

He lay still exhausted.

The clock ticked harshly on: the rest was silence. With this miserable exception; ever and anon the victim's jammed body shuddered so terribly it shook and rattled the iron bedstead, and told of the storm within, the agony of the racked and all-foreboding soul.

For then rolled over that young head hours of mortal anguish that no tongue of man can utter, nor pen can shadow. Chained sane amongst the mad; on his wedding-day; expecting with tied hands the sinister acts of the soul-murderers who had the power to make their lie a truth! We can paint the body writhing vainly against its unjust bonds; but who can paint the loathing, agonized soul in a mental situation so ghastly? For my part I feel it in my heart of hearts; but am impotent to convey it to others; impotent, impotent.

Pray think of it for yourselves, men and women, if you have not *sworn* never to think over a novel. Think of it for your own sakes; Alfred's turn to-day, it may be yours to-morrow

CHAPTER XXXI.

AT two o'clock an attendant stole on tiptoe to the strong-room, unlocked the door, and peeped cautiously in. Seeing the dangerous maniac quiet, he entered with a plate of lukewarm beef and potatoes, and told him bluntly to eat. The crushed one said he could not eat. "You must," said the man. "Eat!" said Alfred; "of what do you think I am made? Pray put it down, and listen to me. I'll give you a hundred pounds to let me out of this place; two hundred; three."

A coarse laugh greeted this proposal. "You might as well have made it a thousand when you was about it."

"So I will," said Alfred, eagerly, "and thank you on my knees besides. Ah, I see you don't believe I have money. I give you my honor I have ten thousand pounds: it was settled on me by my grandfather, and I came of age last week."

"Oh, that's like enough," said the man, carelessly. "Well, you *are* green. Do you think them as sent you here will let you spend your money? No, your money is theirs now."

And he sat down with the plate on his knee, and began to cut the meat in small pieces; while his careless words entered Alfred's heart, and gave him such a glimpse of sinister motives and dark acts to come as set him shuddering.

"Come, none o' that," said the man, suspecting this shudder; he thought it was the prologue to some desperate act; for all a chained madman does is read upon this plan; his terror passes for rage, his very sobs for snarls.

“Oh, be honest with me,” said Alfred, imploringly. “Do you think it is to steal my money the wretch has stolen my liberty?”

“What wretch?”

“My father.”

“I know nothing about it,” said the man, sullenly; “in course there’s mostly money behind, when young gents like you come to be took care of. But you mustn’t go thinking of that, or you’ll excite yourself again; come, you eat your vittles like a Christian, and no more about it.”

“Leave it, that is a good fellow; and then I’ll try and eat a little by and by. But my grief is great — O Julia! Julia! — what shall I do? And I am not used to eat at this time. Will you, my good fellow?”

“Well, I will, now you behave like a gentleman,” said the man.

Then Alfred coaxed him to take off the handcuffs. He refused, but ended by doing it; and so left him.

Four more leaden hours rolled by, and then this same attendant (his name was Brown) brought him a cup of tea. It was welcome to his parched throat; he drank it, and ate a mouthful of the meat to please the man, and even asked for some more tea.

At eight four keepers came into his room, undressed him, compelled him to make his toilet, etc., before them, which put him to shame — being a gentleman — almost as much as it would a woman: they then hobbled him, and fastened his ankles to the bed, and put his hands into muffles, but did not confine his body; because they had lost a lucrative lodger only a month ago, throttled at night in a strait-waistcoat.

Alfred lay in this plight, and compared with anguish unspeakable his joyful anticipations of this night with the strange and cruel reality. “My wedding-night! my

wedding-night!" he cried aloud, and burst into a passion of grief.

By and by he consoled himself a little with the hope that he could not long be incarcerated as a madman being sane; and his good wit told him his only chance was calmness. He would go to sleep and recover composure to bear his wrongs with dignity, and quietly baffle his enemies.

Just as he was dropping off, he felt something crawl over his face. Instinctively he made a violent motion to put his hands up. Both hands were confined; he could not move them. He bounded, he flung, he writhed. His little persecutors were quiet a moment, but the next they began again; in vain he rolled and writhed, and shuddered with loathing inexpressible. They crawled, they smelt, they bit.

Many a poor soul these little wretches had distracted with the very sleeplessness the madhouse professed to cure, not create. In conjunction with the opiates, the confinement, and the gloom of Silverton House, they had driven many a feeble mind across the line that divides the weak and nervous from the unsound.

When he found there was no help, Alfred clenched his teeth and bore it. "Bite on, ye little wretches," he said; "bite on, and divert my mind from deeper stings than yours — if you can."

And they did, a little.

Thus passed the night in mental agony, and bodily irritation and disgust. At daybreak the feasters on his flesh retired, and utterly worn out and exhausted he sank into a deep sleep.

At half-past seven the head keeper and three more came in, and made him dress before them. They handcuffed him, and took him down to breakfast in the noisy ward, set him down on a little bench by the wall like a

naughty boy, and ordered a dangerous maniac to feed him.

The dangerous maniac obeyed, and went and sat beside Alfred with a basin of thick gruel and a great wooden spoon. He shovelled the gruel down his charge's throat mightily superciliously from the very first; and presently, falling into some favorite and absorbing train of thought, he fixed his eye on vacancy, and handed the spoonfuls over his left shoulder with such rapidity and recklessness that it was more like sowing than feeding. Alfred cried out, "Quarter! I can't eat so fast as that, old fellow."

Something in his tone struck the maniac; he looked at Alfred full. Alfred looked at him in return, and smiled kindly but sadly.

"Hallo!" cried the maniac.

"What's up now?" said a keeper, fiercely.

"Why, this man is sane; as sane as I am."

At this there was a hoarse laugh.

"Saner," persisted the maniac, "for I am a little queer at times, you know."

"And no mistake, Jemmy. Now what makes you think he is sane?"

"Looked me full in the face, and smiled at me."

"Oh, that is your test, is it?"

"Yes, it is. You try it on any of those mad beggars there, and see if they can stand it."

"Who invented gunpowder?" said one of the insulted persons, looking as sly and malicious as a magpie going to steal.

Jemmy exploded directly: "I did, ye rascal, ye liar, ye rogue, ye Baconian!" and going higher, and higher, and higher in this strain, was very soon handcuffed with Alfred's handcuffs, and seated on Alfred's bench, and tied to two rings in the wall. On this his martial

ardor went down to zero. "Here is treatment, sir," said he piteously to Alfred. "I see you are a gentleman; now look at this. All spite and jealousy because I invented that invaluable substance, which has done so much to prolong human life and alleviate human misery."

Alfred was now ordered to feed Jemmy, which he did, so quickly were their parts inverted.

Directly after breakfast Alfred demanded to see the proprietor of the asylum.

Answer: Doesn't live here.

The doctor then.

Oh, he has not come.

This monstrosity irritated Alfred. "Well, then," said he, "whoever it is that rules this den of thieves when those two are out of it."

"I rule in Mr. Baker's absence," said the head keeper, "and I'll teach you manners, you young blackguard. Handcuff him."

In five minutes Alfred was handcuffed and flung into a padded room.

"Stay there till you know how to speak to your *betters*," said the head keeper.

Alfred walked up and down, grinding his teeth with rage, for five long hours.

Just before dinner Brown came and took him into a parlor, where Mrs. Archbold was seated writing. Brown retired. The lady finished what she was doing, and kept Alfred standing, like a schoolboy going to be lectured. At last she said, "I have sent for you to give you a piece of advice: it is to try and make friends with the attendants."

"Me make friends with the scoundrels! I thirst for their lives. O madam, I fear I shall kill somebody here."

"Foolish boy, they are too strong for you. Your

worst enemies could wish nothing worse for you than that you should provoke *them*." In saying these words she was so much more kind and womanly that Alfred conceived hopes, and burst out, "O madam, you are human then; you seem to pity me; pray give me pen and paper, and let me write to my friends to get me out of this terrible place; do not refuse me."

Mrs. Archbold resumed her distant manner without apparent effort; she said nothing, but she placed writing materials before him. She then left the room and locked him in.

He wrote a few hasty, ardent words to Julia, telling her how he had been entrapped, but not a word about his sufferings—he was too generous to give her needless pain—and a line to Edward, imploring him to come at once with a lawyer and an honest physician, and liberate him.

Mrs. Archbold returned soon after, and he asked her if she would lend him sealing-wax. "I dare not trust to an envelope in such a place as this," said he. She lent him sealing-wax.

"But how am I to post it?" said he.

"Easily; there is a box in the house; I will show you."

She took him and showed him the box; he put his letters into it, and in the ardor of his gratitude kissed her hand; she winced a little and said, "Mind, this is not by my advice; I would never tell my friends I had been in a madhouse, oh, never. I would be calm, make friends with the servants—they are the real masters—and never let a creature know where I had been."

"Oh, you don't know my Julia," said Alfred; "she will never desert me, never think the worse of me because I have been entrapped illegally into a madhouse."

"Illegally, Mr. Hardie! you deceive yourself. Mr. Baker told me the order was signed by a relation, and the certificates by first-rate lunacy doctors."

"What on earth has that to do with it, madam, when I am as sane as you are?"

"It has everything to do with it. Mr. Baker could be punished for confining a madman in this house without an order and two certificates; but he couldn't for confining a sane person under an order and two certificates."

Alfred could not believe this, but she convinced him that it was so.

Then he began to fear he should be imprisoned for years; he turned pale, and looked at her so piteously, that to soothe him she told him sane people were never kept in asylums now, they only used to be.

"How can they?" said she. "The London asylums are visited four times a year by the commissioners, and the country asylums six times, twice by the commissioners, and four times by the justices. *We* shall be inspected this week or next, and then you can speak to the justices; mind and be calm; say it is a mistake; offer testimony; and ask either to be discharged at once, or to have a commission of lunacy sit on you; ten to one your friends will not face public proceedings; but you *must* begin at the foundation, by making the servants friendly — and by — being calm." She then fixed her large gray eye on him and said, "Now, if I let you dine with me and the first-class patients, will you pledge me your honor to 'be calm,' and not attempt to escape?" Alfred hesitated at that. Her eye dissected his character all the time. "I promise," said he at last, with a deep sigh. "May I sit by you? There is something so repugnant in the very idea of mad people."

"Try and remember it is their misfortune, not their crime," said Mrs. Archbold, just like a matronly sister admonishing a brother from school.

She then whistled in a whisper for Brown, who was lurking about unseen all the time. He emerged and walked about with Alfred, and, by and by, looking down from a corridor, they saw Mrs. Archbold driving the second-class women before her to dinner like a flock of animals. Whenever one stopped to look at anything, or try and gossip, the philanthropic Archbold went at her just like a shepherd's dog at a refractory sheep, caught her by the shoulders, and drove her squeaking, headlong.

At dinner Alfred was so fortunate as to sit opposite a gentleman who nodded and grinned at him all dinner with a horrible leer. He could not, however, enjoy this to the full, for a little distraction at his elbow: his right-hand neighbor kept forking pieces out of his plate and substituting others from his own; there was even a tendency to gristle in the latter. Alfred remonstrated gently at first; the gentleman forbore a minute, then recommenced; Alfred laid a hand very quietly on his wrist and put it back. Mrs. Archbold's quick eye surprised this gesture. "What is the matter there?" said she.

"Oh, nothing serious, madam," replied Alfred, "only this gentleman does me the honor to prefer the contents of my plate to his own."

"Mr. Cooper!" said the Archbold, sternly.

Cooper, the head-keeper, pounced on the offender, seized him roughly by the collar, dragged him from the table, knocking his chair down, and bundled him out of the room with ignominy and fracas, in spite of a remonstrance from Alfred, "Oh, don't be so rough with the poor man."

Then the novice laid down his knife and fork, and ate no more. "I am grieved at my own ill-nature in complaining of such a trifle," said he, when all was quiet.

The company stared considerably at this remark; **it**

seemed to them a most morbid perversion of sensibility; for the deranged, thin-skinned beyond conception in their own persons, and alive to the shadow of the shade of a wrong, are stoically indifferent to the woes of others.

Though Alfred was quiet as a lamb all day, the attendants returned him to the padded room at night, because he had been there last night; but they only fastened one ankle to the bedpost, so he encountered his Liliputians on tolerably fair terms — numbers excepted; they swarmed. Unable to sleep, he put out his hand and groped for his clothes. But they were outside the door, according to rule.

Day broke at last, and he took his breakfast quietly with the first-class patients. It consisted of cool tea in small basins instead of cups, and tablespoons instead of teaspoons, and thick slices of stale bread thinly buttered. A few patients had gruel or porridge instead of tea. After breakfast Alfred sat in the first-class patients' room, and counted the minutes and the hours till Edward should come. After dinner he counted the hours till tea-time. Nobody came, and he went to bed in such grief and disappointment as some men live to eighty without ever knowing.

But when two o'clock came next day, and no Edward, and no reply, then the distress of his soul deepened. He implored Mrs. Archbold to tell him what was the cause. She shook her head, and said, gravely, it was but too common; a man's nearest and dearest were very apt to hold aloof from him the moment he was put into an asylum.

Here an old lady put in her word. "Ah, sir, you must not hope to hear from anybody in this place. Why, I have been two years writing and writing, and can't get a line from my own daughter. To be sure she is a fine lady now, but it was her poor neglected mother that

pinched and pinched to give her a good education, and that is how she caught a good husband. But it's my belief the post in our hall isn't a real post, but only a box; and I think it is contrived so as the letters fall down a pipe into that Baker's hands, and so then when the postman comes" —

The Archbold bent her bushy brows on this chatty personage. "Be quiet, Mrs. Dent; you are talking nonsense, and exciting yourself; you know you are not to speak on that topic. Take care."

The poor old woman was shut up like a knife, for the Archbold had a way of addressing her own sex that crushed them. The change was almost comically sudden to the mellow tones in which she addressed Alfred the very next moment on the very same subject. "Mr. Baker, I believe, sees the letters; and, where our poor patients (with a glance at Dent) write in such a way as to wound and perhaps terrify those who are in reality their best friends, they are not always sent. But I conclude *your* letters have gone. If you feel you can be calm, why not ask Mr. Baker? He is in the house now, for a wonder."

Alfred promised to be calm; and she got him an interview with Mr. Baker.

He was a full-blown pawnbroker of Silverton town, whom the legislature, with that keen knowledge of human nature which marks the British senate, permitted, and still permits, to speculate in insanity, stipulating, however, that the upper servant of all in his asylum should be a doctor; but omitting to provide against the instant dismissal of the said doctor should he go and rob his employer of a lodger — by curing a patient.

As you are not the British legislature, I need not tell you that to this pawnbroker insanity mattered nothing, nor sanity; his trade lay in catching and keeping and

stinting as many lodgers, sane or insane, as he could hold.

There are certain formulæ in these quiet retreats which naturally impose upon greenhorns such as Alfred certainly was, and some visiting justices and lunacy commissioners would seem to be. Baker had been a lodging-house keeper for certified people many years, and knew all the formulæ, — some call them dodges; but these must surely be vulgar minds.

Baker worked "the see-saw formula."

"Letters, young gentleman?" said he, "they are not in my department. They go into the surgery, and are passed by the doctor, except those he examines and orders to be detained."

Alfred demanded the doctor.

"He is gone," was the reply. (Formula.)

Alfred found it as hard to be calm, as some people find it easy to say that word over the wrongs of others.

The next day, but not till the afternoon, he caught the doctor. "My letters! Surely, sir, you have not been so cruel as to intercept them?"

"I intercept no letters," said the doctor, as if scandalized at the very idea. "I see who writes them, and hand them to Mr. Baker, with now and then a remark. If any are detained, the responsibility rests with him."

"He says it rests with you."

"You must have misunderstood him."

"Not at all, sir. One thing is clear, my letters have been stolen either by him or you, and I will know which."

The doctor parried with a formula.

"You are *excited*, Mr. Hardie. Be calm, sir, be calm; or you will be here all the longer."

All Alfred obtained by this interview was a powerful opiate. The head keeper brought it him in bed. He

declined to take it. The man whistled, and the room filled with keepers.

"Now," said Cooper, "down with it, or you'll have to be drenched with this cowhorn."

"You had better take it, sir," said Brown; "the doctor has ordered it you."

"The doctor? Well, let me see the doctor about it."

"He is gone."

"He never ordered it me," said Alfred. Then fixing his eyes sternly on Cooper, "You miscreants, you want to poison me. No, I will not take it. Murder! murder!"

Then ensued a struggle, on which I draw a veil; but numbers won the day, with the help of handcuffs and a cowhorn.

Brown went and told Mrs. Archbold, and what Alfred had said.

"Don't be alarmed," said that strong-minded lady; "it is only one of the old fool's composing draughts. It will spoil the poor boy's sleep for one night, that is all. Go to him the first thing in the morning."

About midnight Alfred was seized with a violent headache and fever; towards morning he was light-headed, and Brown found him loud and incoherent, only he returned often to an expression Mr. Brown had never heard before, —

"Justifiable parricide. Justifiable parricide. Justifiable parricide."

Most people dislike new phrases. Brown ran to consult Mrs. Archbold about this one. After the delay inseparable from her sex, she came in a morning wrapper; and they found Alfred leaning over the bed and bleeding violently at the nose. They were a good deal alarmed, and tried to stop it; but Alfred was quite sensible now, and told them it was doing him good.

"I can manage to see now," he said; "a little while ago I was blind with the poison."

They unstrapped his ankle and made him comfortable, and Mrs. Archbold sent Brown for a cup of strong coffee and a glass of brandy. He tossed them off, and soon after fell into a deep sleep that lasted till tea-time. This sleep the poor doctor ascribed to the sedative effect of his opiate. It *was* the natural exhaustion consequent on the morbid excitement caused by his cursed opiate.

"Brown," said Mrs. Archbold, "if Dr. Bailey prescribes again, let me know. He sha'n't square *this* patient with his certificates, whilst I am here."

This was a shrewd but uncharitable speech of hers. Dr. Bailey was not such a villain as that.

He was a less depraved, and more dangerous animal; he was a fool.

The farrago he had administered would have done an excited maniac no good, of course, but no great harm. It was dangerous to a sane man, and Alfred to the naked eye was a sane man. But then Bailey had no naked eye left; he had been twenty years an M.D. The certificates of Wycherley and Speers were the green spectacles he wore — very green ones — whenever he looked at Alfred Hardie.

Perhaps in time he will forget those certificates, and, on his spectacles dropping off, he will see Alfred is sane. If he does, he will publish him as one of his most remarkable *cures*.

Meanwhile the whole treatment of this ill-starred young gentleman gravitated towards insanity. The inner mind was exasperated by barefaced injustice and oppression, above all, by his letters being stopped; for that convinced him both Baker and Bailey, with their see-saw evasions, knew he was sane, and dreaded a visit from honest, understanding men; and the mind's external organ, the brain, which an asylum professes to soothe, was steadily undermined by artificial sleeplessness. A

man can't sleep in irons till he is used to them; and, when Alfred was relieved of these, his sleep was still driven away by biting insects and barking dogs, — two opiates provided in many of these placid retreats, with a view to the permanence, rather than the comfort, of the lodgers.

On the eighth day Alfred succeeded at last in an object he had steadily pursued for some time. He caught the two see-saw humbugs together.

"Now," said he, "*you* say *he* intercepts my letters, and *he* says it is *you* who do it. Which is the truth?"

They were staggered, and he followed up his advantage. "Look me in the face, gentlemen," said he. "Can you pretend you do not know I am sane? Ah! you turn your heads away. You can only tell this barefaced lie behind my back. Do you believe in God, and in a judgment to come? Then if you cannot release me, at least don't be such scoundrels as to stop my letters, and so swindle me out of a fair trial, an open, public trial."

The doctor parried with a formula. "Publicity would be the greatest misfortune could befall you. Pray be calm."

Now, an asylum is a place not entirely exempt from prejudices; and one of them is that any sort of appeal to God Almighty is a sign or else forerunner of maniacal excitement.

These philosophers forget that by stopping letters, evading public trials, and, in a word, cutting off all appeals to human justice, they compel the patient to turn his despairing eyes and lift his despairing voice to Him whose eye alone can ever really penetrate these dark abodes.

However, the patient who appealed to God above a whisper in Silvertown Grove House used to get soothed directly; and the tranquillizing influences employed were morphia, croton-oil, or a blister.

The keeper came to Alfred in his room. "Doctor has ordered a blister."

"What for? Send for him directly."

"He is gone."

This way of ordering torture, and then coolly going, irritated Alfred beyond endurance. Though he knew he should soon be powerless, he showed fight, made his mark as usual on a couple of his zealous attendants; but not having room to work in was soon overpowered, hobbled, and handcuffed; then they cut off his hair, and put a large blister on the top of his head.

The obstinate brute declined to go mad. They began to respect him for this tenacity of purpose; a decent bedroom was allotted him; his portmanteau and bag were brought him, and he was let walk every day on the lawn with a keeper, only there were no ladders left about, and the trap-door was locked; i.e., the iron gate.

On one of these occasions he heard the gatekeeper whistle three times consecutively. His attendant followed suit, and hurried Alfred into the house, which soon rang with treble signals.

"What is it?" inquired Alfred.

"The visiting justices are in sight. Go into your room, please."

"Yes, I'll go," said Alfred, affecting cheerful compliance, and the man ran off.

The whole house was in a furious bustle. All the hobbles and chains and instruments of restraint were hastily collected and bundled out of sight, and clean sheets were being put on many a filthy bed whose occupant had never slept in sheets since he came there, when two justices arrived and were shown into the drawing-room.

During the few minutes they were detained there by Mrs. Archbold, who was mistress of her whole business,

quite a new face was put on everything and everybody; ancient cobwebs fell; soap and water explored unwonted territories; the harshest attendants began practising pleasant looks and kind words on the patients, to get into the way of it, so that it might not come too abrupt and startle the patients visibly under the visitors' eyes: something like actors working up a factitious sentiment at the wing for the public display, or like a race-horse's preliminary canter. Alfred's heart beat with joy inexpressible. He had only to keep calm, and this was his last day at Silvertown Grove. The first thing he did was to make a careful toilet.

The stinginess of relations and the greed of madhouse proprietors make many a patient look ten times madder than he is, by means of dress. Clothes wear out in an asylum, and are not always taken off though agriculture has long and justly claimed them for her own. And when it is no longer possible to refuse the Rev. Mad Tom or Mrs. Crazy Jane some new raiment, then consanguineous munificence does not go to Poole or Elise, but oftener to paternal or maternal wardrobes, and even to the ancestral chest, the old oak one, singing, —

“Poor things, they are out of the world, what need for them to be in the fashion!” (Formula.)

This arrangement keeps the bump of self-esteem down, especially in women, and so co-operates with many other little arrangements to perpetuate the lodger.

Silvertown Grove in particular was supplied with the grotesque in dress from an inexhaustible source. Whenever money was sent Baker to buy a patient a suit, he went from his lunacy shop to his pawnbroker's, dived headlong into unredeemed pledges, dressed his patient as gentlemen are dressed to reside in cherry-trees, and pocketed five hundred per cent on the double transaction. Now Alfred had already observed that many of the patients

looked madder than they were ; thanks to short trousers and petticoats, holey gloves, ear-cutting shirt-collars, frilled bosoms, shoes made for and declined by the very infantry, coats short in the waist and long in the sleeves, coalscuttle bonnets, and grand-maternal caps. So he made his toilet with care, and put his best hat on to hide his shaven crown. He then kept his door ajar, and waited for a chance of speaking to the justices. One soon came ; a portly old gentleman, with a rubicund face and honest eye, walked slowly along the corridor, looking as wise as he could, cringed on by Cooper and Dr. Bailey ; the latter had arrived post-haste, and Baker had been sent for. Alfred came out, touched his hat respectfully, and begged a private interview with the magistrate. The old gentleman bowed politely, for Alfred's dress, address, and countenance left no suspicion of insanity possible in an unprejudiced mind.

But the doctor whispered in his ear, "Take care, sir. Dangerous !"

Now, this is one of the most effective of the formulæ in a private asylum. How can an inexperienced stranger know for certain that such a statement is a falsehood ? and even the just do not love justice — *to others* — quite so well as they love their own skins. So Squire Tollett very naturally declined a private interview with Alfred ; and even drew back a step, and felt uneasy at being so near him. Alfred implored him not to be imposed upon. "An honest man does not whisper," said he. "Do not let him poison your mind against me ; on my honor I am as sane as you are, and he knows it. Pray, pray use your own eyes and ears, sir, and give yourself a chance of discovering the truth in this stronghold of lies."

"Don't excite yourself, Mr. Hardie," put in the doctor, parentally. (Formula.)

"Don't you interrupt me, doctor ; I am as calm as you

are. Calmer; for, see, you are pale at this moment; that is with fear that your wickedness in detaining a sane man here is going to be exposed. Oh, sir," said he, turning to the justice, "fear no violence from me, not even angry words; my misery is too deep for irritation or excitement. I am an Oxford man, sir, a prize man, an Ireland scholar. But, unfortunately for me, my mother left me ten thousand pounds, and a heart. I love a lady whose name I will not pollute by mentioning it in this den of thieves. My father is the well-known banker, bankrupt, and cheat, of Barkington. He has wasted his own money, and now covets his neighbor's and his son's. He had me entrapped here on my wedding-day, to get hold of my money, and rob me of her I love. I appeal to you, sir, to discharge me; or, if you have not so much confidence in your own judgment as to do that, then I demand a commission of lunacy, and a public inquiry."

Dr. Bailey said, "That would be a most undesirable exposure, both to yourself and your friends." (Formula.)

"It is only the guilty who fear the light, sir," was the prompt reply.

Mr. Tollett said he thought the patient had a legal right to a commission of lunacy if there was property, and he took note of the application. He then asked Alfred if he had any complaint to make of the food, the beds, or the attendants.

"Sir," said Alfred, "I leave those complaints to the insane ones: with me the gigantic wrong drives out the petty worries. I cannot feel my stings for my deep wound."

"Oh, then, you admit you are not treated *unkindly* here?"

"I admit nothing of the kind, sir. I merely decline to encumber your memory with petty injuries, when you are good enough to inquire into a monstrous one."

“Now that is very sensible and considerate,” said Mr. Tollett. “I will see you, sir, before we leave.”

With this promise Alfred was obliged to be content. He retired respectfully, and the justice said, “He seems as sane as I am.” The doctor smiled. The justice observed it, and, not aware that this smile was a formula, as much so as a prize-fighter’s or a ballet-dancer’s, began to doubt a little: he reflected a moment, then asked who had signed the certificates.

“Dr. Wycherley for one.”

“Dr. Wycherley? that is a great authority.”

“One of the greatest in the country, sir.”

“Oh, then one would think he must be more or less deranged.”

“Dangerously so at times. But in his lucid intervals you never saw a more quiet, gentlemanly creature.” (Formula.)

“How sad!”

“Very. He is my most interesting patient (formula), though terribly violent at times. Would you like to see the medical journal about him?”

“Yes; by and by.”

The inspection then continued; the inspector admired the clean sheets that covered the beds, all of them dirty, some filthy: and asked the more reasonable patients to speak freely and say if they had any complaint to make. This question being with the usual sagacity of public inspectors put in the presence of Cooper and the doctor, who stuck to Tollett like wax, the mad people all declared they were very kindly treated: the reason they were so unanimous was this: they knew by experience that, if they told the truth, the justices could not at once remedy their discomforts, whereas the keepers, the very moment the justices left the house, would knock them down, beat them, shake them, strait-jacket them, and starve them;

and the doctor, less merciful, would doctor them. So they shook in their shoes, and vowed they were very comfortable in Silverton Grove.

Thus, in later days, certain commissioners of lunacy inspecting Accomb House, extracted nothing from Mrs. Turner, but that she was happy and comfortable under the benignant sway of Metcalf the mild — there present. It was only by a miracle the public learned the truth: and miracles are rare.

Meantime, Alfred had a misgiving. The plausible doctor had now Squire Tollett's ear, and Tollett was old, and something about him reminded the Oxonian of a trait his friend Horace had detected in old age:

*Vel quòd res omnes timidè gelidè que ministrat.
Dilator, spe longus, iners, etc.*

He knew there was another justice in the house, but he knew also he should not be allowed to get speech with him, if by cunning or force it could be prevented. He kept his door ajar. Presently Nurse Hannah came bustling along with an apronful of things, and let herself into a vacant room hard by. This Hannah was a young woman with a pretty and rather babyish face, diversified by a thick biceps muscle in her arm that a blacksmith need not have blushed for. And I suspect it was this masculine charm, and not her feminine features, that had won her the confidence of Baker and Co., and the respect of his female patients: big or little, excited or not excited, there was not one of them this bicapital baby-face could not pin by the wrists, and twist her helpless into a strong-room, or handcuff her unaided in a moment; and she did it too on slight provocation. Nurse Hannah seldom came into Alfred's part of the house; but when she did meet him, she generally gave him a kind look in passing; and he had resolved to speak to her, and try if

ne could touch her conscience, or move her pity. He saw what she was at, but was too politic to detect her openly and irritate her. He drew back a step, and said softly, "Nurse Hannah! Are you there?"

"Yes, I am here," said she, sharply, and came out of the room hastily, and shut it. "What do you want, sir?"

Alfred clasped his hands together. "If you are a woman, have pity on me."

She was taken by surprise. "What can I do?" said she in some agitation. "I am only a servant."

"At least tell me where I can find the visiting justice, before the keepers stop me."

"Hush! Speak lower," said Hannah. "You *have* complained to one, haven't you?"

"Yes; but he seems a feeble old fogey. Where is the other? Oh, pray tell me!"

"I mustn't; I mustn't. In the noisy ward. There, run."

And run he did.

Alfred was lucky enough to get safe into the noisy ward without being intercepted. And then he encountered a sunburned gentleman, under thirty, in a riding-coat, with a hunting-whip in his hand. It was Mr. Vane, a Tory squire and large landholder in the county.

Now, as Alfred entered at one door, Baker himself came in at the other, and they nearly met at Vane. But Alfred saluted him first, and begged respectfully for an interview.

"Certainly, sir," said Mr. Vane.

"Take care, sir; he is dangerous," whispered Baker. Instantly Mr. Vane's countenance changed. But this time Alfred overheard the formula, and said quietly, "Don't believe him, sir. I am not dangerous; I am as sane as any man in England. Pray examine me, and judge for yourself."

“Ah, that is his delusion,” said Baker. “Come, Mr. Hardie, I allow you great liberties, but you abuse them. You really must not monopolize his worship with your fancies. Consider, sir, you are not the only patient he has to examine.”

Alfred's heart sank ; he turned a look of silent agony on Mr. Vane.

Mr. Vane, either touched by that look, or irritated by Baker's pragmatism, or perhaps both, looked **that** person coolly in the face, and said sternly, “Be silent, sir, and let *the gentleman* speak to me.”

CHAPTER XXXII.

ALFRED, thus encouraged, told his story with forced calmness, and without a word too much. Indeed, so clear and telling was the narrative, and the logic so close, that incoherent patients one or two stole up and listened with wonder and a certain dreamy complacency; the bulk, however, held aloof apathetic, inextricably wrapped in fictitious autobiography.

His story told, Alfred offered the Dodds in evidence that the fourteen thousand pounds was no illusion, and referred to his sister and several friends as witnesses to his sanity, and said the letters he wrote were all stopped in the asylum; and why? That no honest man or woman might know where he was.

He ended by convincing Mr. Vane he was a sane and injured man, and his father a dark, designing person.

Mr. Vane asked him whether he had any other revelations to make. Alfred replied, "Not on my own account, but for the sake of those afflicted persons who are here for life. Well, the beds want repaving; the vermin thinning; the instruments of torture want abolishing, instead of hiding for an hour or two when you happen to come: what do the patients gain by that? The madmen dare not complain to you, sir; because the last time one did complain to the justices (it was Mr. Petworth), they had no sooner passed through the iron gate, than Cooper made an example of him: felled him with his fist, and walked up and down him on his knees, crying, 'I'll teach you to complain to the justices.' But one or two gentlemanly madmen, who soon found out that I am

not one of *them*, have complained to *me* that the attendants wash them too much like hansom cabs, strip them naked, and mop them on the flag-stones, then fling on their clothes without drying them. They say, too, that the meat is tough and often putrid, the bread stale, the butter rancid, the vegetables stinted since they can't be adulterated; and as for sleep, it is hardly known, for the beds are so short your feet stick out; insects, without a name to ears polite, but highly odoriferous and profoundly carnivorous, bite you all night, and dogs howl eternally outside; and, when exhausted nature defies even these enemies of rest, then the doctor, who seems to be in the pay of insanity, claps you on a blister by brute force, and so drives away sleep, insanity's cure, or hocusses you by brute force as he did me, and so steals your sleep, and tries to steal your reason, with his opium, henbane, morphia, and other tremendous brain-stealers. With such a potion, sir, administered by violence, he gave me in one night a burning fever, headache, loss of sight, and bleeding at the nose, as Mrs. Archbold will tell you. Oh, look into these things, sir, in pity to those whom Heaven has afflicted! To me they are but strokes with a feather; I am a sane man torn from love and happiness, and confined among the mad; discomfort is nothing to me, comfort is nothing; you can do nothing for me but restore me to my dignity as a man, my liberty as a Briton, and the rights as a citizen I have been swindled out of by a fraudulent bankrupt and his tools, two venal doctors, who never saw me but for one five minutes, but came to me ready bribed at a guinea apiece, and so signed away my wits behind my back."

"Now, Mr. Baker," said Vane, "what do you say to all this?"

Baker smiled with admirable composure, and replied with crafty moderation, "He is a gentleman, and believes

every word he says; but it is all his delusions. Why, to begin, sir, his father has nothing to do with putting him in here; nothing on earth. (Alfred started, then smiled incredulous.) And, in the next place, there are no instruments of restraint here, but two pair of handcuffs and two strait-jackets, and these never hardly used; we trust to the padded rooms, you know. And, sir," said he, getting warm, which instantly affected his pronunciation, "if there's a hinsect in the ouse, I'll heat im."

Delusion is a big word, especially in a madhouse: it overpowers a visitor's understanding. Mr. Vane was staggered. Alfred, whose eager eyes were never off his face, saw this with dismay, and feeling that, if he failed in the simpler matter, he should be sure to fail in establishing his sanity, he said with inward anxiety, though with outward calmness, "Suppose we test these delusions?"

"With all my heart," said Vane.

Baker's countenance fell.

"Begin with the instruments of restraint. Find me them."

Baker's countenance brightened up; he had no fear of their being found.

"I will," said Alfred; "please to follow me."

Baker grinned with anticipated triumph.

Alfred led the way to a bedroom near his own, and asked Mr. Baker to unlock it. Baker had not the key; no more had Cooper. The latter was sent for it; he returned, saying the key was mislaid.

"That I expected," said Alfred. "Send for the kitchen poker, sir: I'll soon unlock it."

"Fetch the kitchen poker," said Vane.

"Good gracious, sir!" said Cooper; "he only wants that to knock all our brains out. You have no idea of his strength and ferocity."

"Well lied, Cooper," said Alfred, ironically.

"Fetch *me* the poker," said Vane.

Cooper went for it, and came back with the key instead.

The door was opened, and they all entered. Alfred looked under the bed. The rest stood round it.

There was nothing to be seen but a year's dust.

Alfred was dumfounded, and a cold perspiration began to gather on his brow. He saw at once a false move would be fatal to him.

"Well, sir," said Vane, grimly, "where are they?"

Alfred caught sight of a small cupboard; he searched it: it was empty. Baker and Cooper grinned at his delusion quietly, but so that Vane might see that formula. Alfred returned to the bed and shook it. Cooper and Baker left off grinning; Alfred's quick eye caught this, and he shook the bed violently, furiously.

"Ah!" said Mr. Vane, "I hear a chink."

"It is an iron bedstead, and old," suggested Baker.

Alfred tore off the bedclothes, and then the mattress. Below the latter was a framework, and below the framework a receptacle about six inches deep, five feet long, and three broad, filled with chains, iron belts, wristlocks, muffles, and screw-locked hobbles, etc.,—a regular Inquisition.

If Baker had descended from the Kemble family, instead of rising from nothing, he could not have acted better. "Good heavens!" cried he, "where do these come from? They must have been left here by the last proprietor."

Vane replied only by a look of contempt, and ordered Cooper to go and ask Mr. Tollett to come to him.

Alfred improved the interval. "Sir," said he, "all my delusions, fairly tested, will turn out like this."

"They *shall* be tested, sir; I give you my word."

Mr. Tollett came, and the two justices commenced a genuine scrutiny, their first. They went now upon the true method in which all these dark places ought to be inspected. They did not believe a word; they suspected everything; they examined patients apart, detected cruelty, filth, and vermin under philanthropic phrases and clean linen; and the upshot was, they reprimanded Baker and the attendants severely, and told him his license should never be renewed, unless at their next visit the whole asylum was reformed. They ordered all the iron body-belts, chains, leg-locks, wrist-locks, and muffs, to be put into Mr. Tollett's carriage, and concluded a long inspection by inquiring into Alfred's sanity. At this inquiry they did not allow Baker to be even present, but only Dr. Bailey.

First they read the order, and found it really was not Alfred's father who had put him into the asylum. Then they read the certificates, especially Wycherley's. It accused Alfred of headache, insomnia, nightly visions, a rooted delusion (pecuniary), a sudden reversion to an affectionate father; and at the doctor's last visit, a wild look (formula), great excitement, and threats of violence without any provocation to justify them. This overpowered the worthy squires' understandings, to begin. But they proceeded to examine the three books an asylum has to keep by law: the visitors' book, the case book, and the medical journal. All these were kept with the utmost looseness in Silverton House, as indeed they are in the very best of these places. However, by combining the scanty notices in the several books, they arrived at this total: —

“Admitted April 11. Had a very wild look, and was much excited. Attempted suicide by throwing himself into a tank. Attacked the keepers, for rescuing him, with prodigious strength and violence. Refused food.”

And some days after came an entry with his initials instead of his name, which was contrary to law. "A. H. Much excited. Threats. Ordered a composing draught."

And a day or two after: "A. H. Excited. Blasphemous. Ordered blister."

The first entry, however, was enough. The doctor had but seen real facts through his green spectacles, and lo! "suicide," "homicide," and "refusal of food," three cardinal points of true mania.

Mr. Vane asked Dr. Bailey whether he was better since he came.

"Oh, infinitely better," said Dr. Bailey. "We hope to cure him in a month or two."

They then sent for Mrs. Archbold, and had a long talk with her, recommending Alfred to her especial care; and, having acted on his judgment and information in the teeth of those who called him insane, turned tail at a doctor's certificate, distrusted their eyesight at an unsworn affidavit.

Alfred was packing up his things to go away, bright as a lark. Mrs. Archbold came to him, and told him she had orders to give him every comfort, and the justices hoped to liberate him at their next visit.

The poor wretch turned pale. "At their next visit!" he cried. "What, not to-day? When is their next visit?"

Mrs. Archbold hesitated, but at last she said, "Why, you know; I told you. They come four times every year."

The disappointment was too bitter. The contemptible result of all his patience, self-command, and success, was too heart-breaking. He groaned aloud. "And you can come with a smile and tell me that; you cruel woman." Then he broke down altogether and burst out crying. "You were born without a heart," he sobbed.

Mrs. Archbold quivered at that. "I wish I had been," said she, in a strange, soft, moving voice; then casting an eloquent look of reproach on him, she went away in visible agitation, and left him sobbing. Once out of his sight she rushed into another room, and there, taking no more notice of a gentle madwoman its occupant than of the bed or the table, she sank into a chair, and, throwing her head back with womanly abandon, laid her hand upon her bosom that heaved tempestuously.

And soon the tears trickled out of her imperious eyes, and ran unrestrained.

The mind of Edith Archbold corresponded with her powerful frame, and bushy brows. Inside this woman all was vigor; strong passions, strong good-sense to check or hide them; strong will to carry them out. And between these mental forces a powerful struggle was raging. She was almost impenetrable to mere personal beauty, and inclined to despise early youth in the other sex; and six months spent with Alfred in a quiet country house would probably have left her reasonably indifferent to him. But the first day she saw him in Silverton House, he broke through her guard, and pierced at once to her depths; first he terrified her by darting through the window to escape: and terror is a passion. So is pity; and never in her life had she overflowed with it as when she saw him drawn out of the tank and laid on the grass. If, after all, he was as sane as he looked, that brave, high-spirited young creature, who preferred death to the touch of coarse confining hands!

No sooner had he filled her with dismay and pity, than he bounded from the ground before her eyes and fled: she screamed, and hoped he would escape; she could not help it. Next she saw him fighting alone against seven or eight, and with unheard-of prowess almost beating

them. She sat at the window panting, with clenched teeth and hands, and wished him to beat, and admired him, wondered at him. He yielded, but not to them: to her. All the compliments she had ever received were tame compared with this one. It thrilled her vanity. He was like the men she had read of, and never seen; the young knights of chivalry. She glowed all over at him, and detecting herself in time was frightened. Her strong good-sense warned her to beware of this youth, who was nine years her junior, yet had stirred her to all her depths in an hour; and not to see him nor think of him too much. Accordingly she kept clear of him altogether at first. Pity soon put an end to that; and she protected and advised him, but with a cold and lofty demeanor put on express. What with her kind acts and her cold manner he did not know what to make of her; and often turned puzzled earnest eyes upon her, as much as to say, Are you really my friend or not? Once she forgot herself and smiled so tenderly in answer to these imploring eyes, that his hopes rose very high indeed. He flattered himself she would let him out of the asylum before long. That was all Julia's true lover thought of.

A feeling hidden, and not suppressed, often grows fast in a vigorous nature. Mrs. Archbold's fancy for Alfred was subjected to this dangerous treatment; and it smouldered, and smouldered, till from a penchant it warmed to a fancy, from a fancy to a passion. But penchant, fancy, or passion, she hid it with such cunning and resolution, that neither Alfred nor even those of her own sex saw it; nor did a creature even suspect it, except Nurse Hannah; but *her* eyes were sharpened by jealousy, for that muscular young virgin was beginning to sigh for him herself, with a gentle timidity that contrasted prettily with her biceps muscle and prowess against her own sex.

Mrs. Archbold had more passion than tenderness, but what woman is not to be surprised and softened? When her young favorite, the greatest fighter she had ever seen, broke down at the end of his gallant effort and began to cry like a girl, her bowels of compassion yearned within her, and she longed to cry with him. She only saved herself from some imprudence by flight, and had her cry alone. After a flow of tears such a woman is invincible; she treated Alfred at tea-time with remarkable coldness and reserve. This piece of acting led to unlooked-for consequences; it emboldened Cooper, who was raging against Alfred for telling the justices, but had forbore from violence, for fear of getting the house into a fresh scrape. He now went to the doctor, and asked for a powerful drastic; Bailey gave him two pills, or rather boluses, containing croton-oil — *inter alia*; for Bailey was one of the *farraginous* fools of the unscientific science. Armed with this weapon of destruction, Cooper entered Alfred's bedroom at night, and ordered him to take them: he refused. Cooper whistled, and four attendants came. Alfred knew he should soon be powerless; he lost no time, sprang at Cooper, and with his long arm landed a blow that knocked him against the wall, and in this position, where his body could not give, struck him again with his whole soul, and cut his cheek right open. The next minute he was pinned, handcuffed, and in a strait-jacket, after crippling one assailant with a kick on the knee.

Cooper, half-stunned, and bleeding like a pig, recovered himself now, and burned for revenge. He uttered a frightful oath, and jumped on Alfred as he lay bound and powerless, and gave him a lesson he never forgot.

Every art has its secrets; the attendants in such mad-houses as this have been for years possessed of one they are too modest to reveal to justices, commissioners, or

the public: the art of breaking a man's ribs, or breast-bone, or both, without bruising him externally. The convicts at Toulon arrive at a similar result by another branch of the art: they stuff the skin of a conger eel with powdered stone; then give the obnoxious person a sly crack with it; and a rib or backbone is broken with no contusion to mark the external violence used. But Mr. Cooper and his fellows do their work with the knee-joint: it is round, and leaves no bruise. They subdue the patient by walking up and down him on their knees. If they don't jump on him, as well as promenade him, the man's spirit is often the only thing broken; if they do, the man is apt to be broken bodily as well as mentally. Thus died Mr. Sizer in 1854, and two others quite recently. And how many more, God only knows; we can't count the stones at the bottom of a dark well.

Cooper then sprang furiously on Alfred, and went kneeling up and down him. Cooper was a heavy man, and his weight crushed and hurt the victim's legs; but that was a trifle; as often as he kneeled on Alfred's chest, the crushed one's whole framework seemed giving way, and he could scarcely breathe. But Brown drew Cooper back by the collar, saying, "D'ye want to kill him?" And at this moment Mrs. Archbold, who was on the watch, came in with Hannah and another nurse, and the three women at a word from their leader pinned Cooper simultaneously, and, taking him at a disadvantage, handcuffed him in a moment with a strength, sharpness, skill, and determination not to be found in women out of a madhouse — luckily for the newspaper husbands.

The other keepers looked astounded at this master-stroke; but, as no servant had ever affronted Mrs. Archbold without being dismissed directly, they took their cue and said, "We advised him, ma'am, but he would not listen to us."

“Cooper,” said Mrs. Archbold as soon as she recovered her breath, “you are not fit for your place. To-morrow you go, or I go.”

Cooper, cowed in a moment by the handcuffs, began to whine and say that it was all Alfred’s fault.

But Mrs. Archbold was now carried away by two passions instead of one, and they were together too much for prudence; she took a handful of glossy locks out of her bosom and shook them in Cooper’s face.

“You monster!” said she; “you should go, for *that*, if you were my own brother.”

The two young nurses assented loudly, and turned and cackled at Cooper for cutting off such lovely hair.

He shrugged his shoulders at them, and said, sulkily, to Mrs. Archbold, “Oh, I didn’t know. Of course, if you have fallen in love with him, my cake is burnt. ’Tisn’t the first lunatic you have taken a fancy to.”

At this brutal speech, all the more intolerable for not being quite false, Mrs. Archbold turned ashy pale and looked round for a weapon to strike him dead; but found none so handy and so deadly as her tongue.

“It is not the first you have tried to MURDER,” said she. “I know all about that death in Calton Retreat: you kept it dark before the coroner, but it is not too late, I’ll open the world’s eyes; I was only going to dismiss you, sir: but you have insulted me. I’ll hang you in reply.”

Cooper turned very pale and was silent; his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth.

But a feeble, unexpected voice issued from the bed and murmured cheerfully, though with some difficulty, a single word:—

“Justice!”

At an expression so out of place, they all started with surprise.

Alfred went on: "You are putting the saddle on the wrong horse. The fault lies with those villains Baker and Bailey. Cooper is only a servant, you know, and obeys orders."

"What business had the wretch to cut your hair off?" said Mrs. Archbold, turning on Alfred with flashing eyes. Her blood once up, she was ready to quarrel even with him for taking part against himself.

"Because he was ordered to put on a blister, and hair must come off before a blister can go on," replied Alfred, soberly.

"That is no excuse for him beating you, and trying to break your front teeth."

She didn't mind so much about his side ribs.

"No," replied Alfred. "But I hit him first; look at the bloke's face. Dear Mrs. Archbold, you are my best friend in this horrid place, and you have beautiful eyes, and talk of teeth, look at yours! but you haven't much sense of justice: forgive me for saying so. Put the proposition into signs; there is nothing like that for clearing away prejudice. B and C have a scrimmage: B begins it, C gets the worst of it; in comes A and turns away — C. Is that justice? It is me you ought to turn away; and I wish to Heaven you would: dear Mrs. Archbold, do pray turn me away, and keep the other blackguard."

At this extraordinary and, if I may be allowed the expression, Alfredian speech, the men first stared, and then laughed; the women smiled, and then were nearer crying than laughing.

And so it was, that justice handcuffed, strait-jacketed, blistered, and impartial, sent from its bed of torture a beam through Cooper's tough hide to his inner heart. He hung his head and stepped towards Alfred: "You're what I call a man," he said. "I don't care a curse

whether I stay or go, after what she has said to me. But, come what may, you're a gentleman, and one as can put hisself in a poor man's place. Why, sir, I wasn't always so rough; but I have been twenty years at it; and mad folk they'd wear the patience out of Jove, and the milk of human kindness out of saints and opossums. However, if I was to stay here all my life, instead of going to-morrow, I'd never lift hand to trouble you again, for you taking my part against yourself like that."

"I'll put that to the test," said Mrs. Archbold, sharply. "Stay — on your probation. Hannah!"

And baby-face biceps at a look took off his handcuffs; which she had been prominent in putting on.

This extraordinary scene ended in the men being dismissed, and the women remaining and going to work after their kind.

"The bed is too short, for one thing," said Hannah. "Look at his poor feet sticking out, and cold as a stone. Just feel of them, Jane."

"No, no; murder!" cried Alfred; "that tickles."

Hannah ran for a chair, Jane for another pillow. Mrs. Archbold took off his handcuffs, and, passing her hand softly and caressingly over his head, lamented the loss of his poor hair. Amongst them they relieved him of his strait-jacket, set up his head, covered his feet, and he slept like a top for want of drastics and opiates, and in spite of some brilliant charges by the Liliputian cavalry.

After this the attendants never molested Alfred again; nor did the doctor; for Mrs. Archbold got his boluses, and sent them up to a famous analyzing chemist in London, and told him she had; and said, "I'll thank you not to prescribe at random for *that* patient any more." He took the lady's prescription, coming as it did in a voice quietly grim, and with a momentary but wicked glance shot from under her black brows.

Alfred was all the more miserable at his confinement: his melancholy deepened now there was no fighting to excite him. A handsome, bright young face clouded with sadness is very pitiable, and I need not say that both the women who had fallen in love with him had their eyes, or at least the tails of their eyes, forever on his face. The result varied with the characters of the watchers. That young face, ever sad, made Mrs. Archbold sigh, and long to make him happy under her wing. How it wrought on the purer and more womanly Hannah will be revealed by the incident I have to relate. Alfred was sitting on a bench in the corridor bowed down by grief, and the Archbold lurking in a room hard by, feasting her eyes on him through an aperture in the door — caused by the inspection plate being under repair — when an erotic maniac was driven past. She had obtained access — with marvellous cunning — to the men's side; but was now coming back with a flea in her ear, and faster than she went, being handcuffed and propelled by baby-face biceps. On passing the disconsolate Alfred, the latter eyed him coyly, gave her stray sheep a coarse push — as one pushes a *thing* — and laid a timid hand, gentle as falling down, upon the rougher sex. Contrast sudden and funny.

“Don't be so sad, sir,” she murmured, cooing like the gentlest of doves. “I can't bear to see you look like that.”

Alfred looked up, and met her full with his mournful, honest eyes. “Ah, Hannah, how can I be anything but sad, imprisoned here, sane amongst the mad?”

“Well, and so am I, sir; so is Mrs. Archbold herself.”

“Ay, but you have not been entrapped, imprisoned, on your wedding-day. I cannot even get a word sent to my Julia, my wife that ought to be. Only think of the affront they have made me put on her I love better, ten

times better, than myself. Why, she must have been waiting for me, humiliated perhaps by my absence. What will she think of me? The rogues will tell her a thousand lies: she is very high-spirited, Hannah, impetuous like myself, only so gentle and so good; oh, my angel, my angel, I shall lose you forever!"

Hannah clasped her hands, with tears in her eyes; "No, no," she cried; "it is a burning shame to part true lovers like you and her. Hush! speak low. Brown told me you are as well as he is."

"God bless him for it, then."

"You have got money, they say: try it on with Brown."

"I will. Oh, you darling! What is the matter?"

For baby-face was beginning to whimper.

"Oh, nothing, sir; only you are so glad to go; and we shall be sorry to part with you, but you won't care for that. Oh! oh! oh!"

"What, do you think I shall forget you and your kindness? Never. I'll square accounts with friends and foes; not one shall be forgotten."

"Don't offer me any of your money," sobbed Hannah, "for I wouldn't touch it. Good-by," said she: "I sha'n't have as much as a kiss for it, I'll be bound. Good-by," said she again, and never moved.

"Oh, won't you, though?" cried Alfred, gayly. "What is that? and that? and that? Now what on earth are you crying about? Dry your tears, you dear good-hearted girl: no, I'll dry them for you."

He took out a white handkerchief, and dried her cheeks gently for her, and gave her a parting kiss; but the Archbold's patience was exhausted: a door opened nearly opposite, and there she stood yellow with jealousy, and sombre as night with her ebon brows. At sight of this lowering figure Hannah uttered a squawk,

and fled with cheeks red as fire. Alfred, not aware of Mrs. Archbold's smouldering passion, and little dreaming that jealous anger and rage stood incarnate before him, burst out laughing like a mischievous boy. On this she swept upon him, and took him by both shoulders, and awed him with her lowering brows close to his. "You ungrateful wretch," she said, violently, and panted.

His color rose. "Ungrateful? That I am not, madam. Why do you call me so?"

"You are, you are. What have I done to you that you run from me to the very servants? However, she shall be packed off this very night, and you to thank for it."

This was the way to wound the generous youth. "Now it is you that are ungenerous," he said. "What harm has the poor girl done? She had a virtuous movement, and pitied me for the heartless fraud I suffer by; that is all. Pray, do you never pity me?"

"Was it this virtuous movement set her kissing you?" said the Archbold, clenching her teeth as if the word stung her, like the sight.

"She didn't, now," said Alfred: "it was I kissed her."

"And yet you pretend to love your Julia so truly?"

"This is no place for that sacred name, madam. But be sure I have no secrets from her, and kiss nobody she would not kiss herself."

"She must be a very accommodating young lady."

At this insult Alfred rose pale with anger, and was about to defy his monitor mortally, but the quick-witted woman saw and disarmed him; in one moment, before ever he could speak, she was a transformed creature, a penitent: she put her hands together supplicatingly, and murmured, —

"I didn't mean it: I respect *her* and your love for her: forgive me, Alfred; I am so unhappy; oh, forgive me!"

And behold, she held his hand between her soft, burning palms, and her proud head sank languidly on his shoulder, and the inevitable tears ran gently.

Morals apart, it was glorious love-making.

"Bother the woman!" thought Alfred.

"Promise me not to do it again," she murmured, "and the girl shall stay."

"O Lord, yes! I promise; though I can't see what it matters to you."

"Not much, cruel boy, alas! but it matters to her; for,"—she kissed Alfred's hand gently and rose to her feet and moved away, but at the second step turned her head sudden as a bird and finished her sentence,—“if you kiss her before me, I shall kill her before you.”

Here was a fresh complication. The men had left off blistering, torturing, and bullying him; but his guardian angels, the women, were turning up their sleeves to pull caps over him, and plenty of the random scratches would fall on him. If anything could have made him pine more to be out of the horrid place, this voluptuous prospect would. He hunted everywhere for Brown. But he was away the day with a patient. At night he lay awake for a long time, thinking how he should open the negotiation: he shrank from it. He felt a delicacy about bribing Beelzebub's servant to betray him.

As Hannah had originated the idea, he thought he might very well ask her to do the dirty work of bribing Brown, and he would pay her for it: only in money, not kisses. With this resolution he sank to sleep; and his spirit broke prison: he stood with Julia before the altar, and the priest made them one. Then the church and the company and daylight disappeared, and her own

sweet, low, moving voice came thrilling, "My own, own, own." She murmured, "I love you ten times more for all you have endured for me;" and with this her sweet lips settled on his like the dew.

Impartial sleep flies at the steps of the scaffold and the gate of Elysium: so Alfred awoke at the above, but doubted whether he was quite awake, for two velvet lips seemed to be still touching his. He stirred, and somebody was gone like the wind, with a rustle of flying petticoats, and his door shut in a moment: it closed with a catch-lock. This dastardly vision had opened it with her key, and left it open to make good her retreat if he should awake. Alfred sat up in bed indignant, and somewhat fluttered. "Confound her impudence!" said he. But there was no help for it: he grinned and bore it, as he had the blisters, and boluses, etc., rolled the clothes round his shoulders, and off to the sleep of the just again. Not so the passionate hypocrite, who, maddened by a paroxysm of jealousy, had taken this cowardly advantage of a prisoner. She had sucked fresh poison from those honest lips, and filled her veins with molten fire. She tossed and turned the livelong night in a high fever of passion, nor were the cold chills wanting of shame and fear at what she had done.

In the morning Alfred remembered this substantial vision, and determined to find out which of those two it was. "I shall know by her looks," said he: "she won't be able to meet my eye." Well, the first he saw was Mrs. Archbold. She met his eye full with a mild and pensive dignity. "Come, it is not you," thought Alfred. Presently he fell in with Hannah. She wore a serene, infantine face, the picture of unobtrusive modesty. Alfred was dumfounded. "It's not this one, either," said he. "But then, it must. Confound her impudence for looking so modest!" However, he did not speak to

her: he was looking out for a face that interested him far more,—the weather-beaten countenance of Giles Brown. He saw him once or twice, but could not get him alone till the afternoon. He invited him into his room, and, when he got him there, lost no time. “Just look me in the face, Brown,” said he quietly. Brown looked him in the face.

“Now, sir, am I mad or sane?”

Brown turned his head away. Alfred laughed. “No, no, none of your tricks, old fellow: look me in the face while you answer.”

The man colored. “I can’t look a gentleman like you in the face, and tell him he is mad.”

“I should think not. Well, now, what shall I give you to help me escape?”

“Hush! don’t mention that, sir: it’s as much as my place is worth even to listen to you.”

“Well, then I must give you as much as your place is worth. Please to calculate that, and name the figure.”

“My place! I wouldn’t lose it for a hundred pounds.”

“Exactly. Then I’ll give you a hundred guineas.”

“And how am I to get my money, sir?”

“The first time you are out, come to Albion Villa, in Barkington, and I’ll have it all ready for you.”

“And suppose you were to say, ‘No: you didn’t ought ever to have been confined?’”

“I must trouble you to look in my face again, Mr. Brown. Now, do you see treason, bad faith, avarice, ingratitude, rascality, in it?”

“Not a grain of ’em,” said Brown, with an accent of conviction. “Well, now, I’ll tell you the truth. I can read a gent by this time, and I’m no more afeared for the money than if I had it in my hand. But, ye see my stomach won’t let me do it.”

This was a sad disappointment, so sudden, too.

"Your stomach?" said Alfred, ruefully. "What do you mean?"

"Ay, my stomach. Wouldn't *your* stomach rise against serving a man that had done you the worst turn one man can do another, — been and robbed you of your sweet-heart?"

Alfred stared with amazement.

Brown continued, and now with some emotion: "Hannah Blake and I were very good friends till you came; and I was thinking of asking her to name the day, but now she won't look at me. 'Don't come teasing me,' says she, 'I am meat for your master.' It's you that have turned the girl's head, sir."

"Bother the women!" said Alfred, cordially. "Oh, what plagues they are! And how unjust *you* are, to spite me for the fault of another. Can I help the fools from spooning upon me?" He reflected a moment, then burst out, "Brown, you are a duffer, a regular duffer. What, don't you see your game is to get me out of the place? If you do, in forty-eight hours I shall be married to my Julia, and that dumpling-faced girl will be cured. But if you keep me here, by Gee! sir, I'll make hot love to your Hannah, boiling hot, hotter than ever was, — out of the isles of Greece. Oh! do help me out, and I'll give you the hundred pounds, and I'll give Hannah another hundred pounds, on condition she marries you; and if she won't marry you, she sha'n't have a farthing, only a good hiding."

Brown was overpowered by his maniac's logic. "You *have* a head," said he; "there's my hand: I'll go in, if I die for it."

They now put their heads together over the means. Brown's plan was to wait, and wait, for an opportunity; Alfred's was to make one this very night.

"But how can I?" said Brown. "I sha'n't have the

key of your room. I am not on watch in your part to-night."

"Borrow Hannah's."

"Hannah's? She has got no key of the male patients' rooms."

"Oh, yes, she has; of mine, at all events."

"What makes you think that, sir?" said Brown, suspiciously.

Alfred didn't know what to say: he could not tell him why he felt sure she had a key.

"Just go quietly and ask her for it," said he; "don't tell her I sent you, now."

Brown obeyed, and returned in half an hour with the key of the vacant bedroom, where the hobbles and chains were hidden on the arrival of the justices.

"She tells me this is the only key she has of any room in this corridor. But, dear heart," said Brown, "how quick-sighted the women are! She said, says she, 'If it is to bring sorrowful true lovers together again, Giles, or the like of that, I'll try and get the key you want off Mrs. Archbold's bunch, though I get the sack for it,' says she. 'I know she leaves them in the parlor at night,' says Hannah. She is a trump, you must allow."

Alfred colored up. He suspected he had been unjust.

"She is a good, kind, single-hearted girl," said he; "and neither of you shall find me ungrateful."

It was evident, by the alacrity Brown now showed, that he had got his orders from Hannah.

It was agreed that Alfred should lie down at night in his clothes, ready to seize the right moment; that Hannah should get the key, and watch the coast clear, and let him out into the corridor; and Brown get him down by a back stairs, and out on the lawn. There he would find a ladder close by the wall, and his own arms and legs must do the rest.

And now Alfred was a changed creature; his eye sparkled; he walked on air, and already sniffed the air of liberty.

After tea Brown brought in some newspapers, and made Alfred a signal, previously agreed on, that the ladder was under the east wall. He went to bed early, put on his tweed shooting-jacket and trousers, and lay listening to the clock with beating heart.

At first, feet passed to and fro from time to time. These became less frequent as the night wore on.

Presently a light foot passed, stopped at the door, and made a sharp scratch on it with some metal instrument.

It was the key. The time was not ripe to use it, but good Hannah had taken this way to let him know she had got it.

This little scratch outside his door, oh, it made his heart leap and thrill. One great difficulty was overcome. He waited, and waited, but with glowing, hopeful heart; and at last a foot came swiftly, the key turned, and Hannah opened the door. She had a bull's-eye lantern.

"Take your shoes in your hand," she whispered, "and follow me."

He followed her. She led him in and out, to the door of the public room belonging to the second-class patients. Then she drew her whistle, and breathed very softly. Brown answered as softly from the other end. He was waiting at the opposite door.

"All right," said she; "the dangerous part is over." She put a key into the door, and said very softly, "Good-by."

"God bless you, Hannah!" said Alfred, with deep emotion. "God in heaven bless you for this!"

"He will, He does," said the single-hearted girl, and put her other hand to her breast with a great gulp. She opened the door slowly. "Good-by, dear. I shall never see you again."

And so these two parted; for Hannah could not bear the sight of Giles at that moment. He was welcome to Alfred though, most welcome, and conducted him by devious ways to the kitchen, lantern in hand.

He opened the kitchen-door softly, and saw two burly strangers seated at a table, eating with all their souls, and Mrs. Archbold standing before the fire, but looking towards him: for she had heard his footsteps ever so far off.

The men looked up, and saw Alfred. They rose to their feet, and said, "This will be the gentleman, madam?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Archbold.

"Your servant, sir," said the man very civilly. "If you are ready we are."

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